

Nicaraguans deal blows to U.S.-backed mercenaries

BY BILL GRETTIER

SAN JACINTO, Nicaragua — Leaders of Nicaragua's revolutionary government have recently reported important victories against the U.S.-financed mercenaries, called *contras*. According to Defense Minister Humberto Ortega, "Sandinista troops are continuing to deal systematic blows" to the counterrevolutionary forces that President Reagan endorses as "freedom fighters."

Calling them instead "champions of terrorism," Ortega described their present situation as "an irreversible process of moral and operational decomposition."

Particularly important, he said, is the defeat suffered by Pastora's forces in the south. Edén Pastora is a former Sandinista leader who turned against the revolution. His Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (ARDE) is one of the CIA-funded terrorist groups used by the U.S. government in its attempt to overthrow the Sandinista government.

Ortega spoke September 2 at an event commemorating the sixth anniversary of the Sandinista People's Army. It also marked the 58th anniversary of the Army to Defend National Sovereignty with which Augusto César Sandino drove the U.S. Marines out of Nicaragua 50 years ago.

The audience consisted of outstanding members of the Sandinista army, including infantry, artillery, air force, coast guard, and armored divisions.

Ortega especially emphasized the role of young people in the Patriotic Military Service, Nicaragua's draft, and the organization of workers and peasants in militia and reserve units. He described this "massive, national mobilization of the people" as the "guarantee of final victory."

Ortega condemned the Reagan administration's new "Office of Humanitarian Aid" which, he said, "shamelessly directs the war organized and carried out by mercenaries from outside the country."

He characterized as "sellouts" leaders of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), the major counterrevolutionary terrorist group.

"The imperialist scheme has succeeded in joining together those who will never share the concerns of the common people. With millions of dollars they have succeeded in uniting those who will never fight for independence and self-determination."

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South Africa's rulers brutalize Black miners

BY FRED FELDMAN

The struggle of South Africa's Black miners for decent pay and union rights is continuing in the face of a total war waged against them by the mine owners and the racist government.

The conditions Black miners face tell a lot about the nature of apartheid and about why growing numbers of Blacks are ready to give their lives to destroy it.

The National Union of Mineworkers, which is fighting to organize and win union rights for South Africa's hundreds of thousands of Black miners, halted its strike at five gold mines and two coal mines September 3.

The union is now asking the courts to bar company moves to fire thousands of Black workers who participated in the strike. "We will be mobilizing men in the meanwhile," said union spokeswoman Manoko Nchwe, "and we don't see any problem getting the strike going again."

The strike was halted after one miner was killed and hundreds were wounded by government cops and company security guards using armored cars, shotguns, whips, tear gas, and rubber bullets.

Some miners were forced to work at gunpoint. Cops and security guards attacked groups of miners who attempted to meet on the grounds of the hostels where almost all Black gold miners are required by law to live.

Dozens were arrested for supporting the strike.

Despite this, up to 28,000 miners participated in the walkout that began September 1 against three mining companies



Black South African miners. In the face of violence by mine owners, the National Union of Mineworkers halted three day strike.

that had refused to increase their pay offers.

Three others, including the giant Anglo American Corp., partially met union demands by offering a pay increase of from 19 to 22 percent. The NUM has been weaker at the three companies that were struck.

"The mining companies partly broke our strike and partly caught us unawares. But it's also a victory for us because it has

shown the determination of our members in spite of all kinds of intimidation," said Manoko Nchwe.

The accomplishments of the Black miners are particularly impressive because the conditions they struggle under are vastly different from those faced by, for example, members of the United Mine Workers of America.

The difference is apartheid. This is the

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Atlanta: 2,000 say 'Free S. Africa!'

BY WILLIAM O'SHEA

ATLANTA — Chanting "Free South Africa," 2,000 students from this city's Black colleges rallied against apartheid on August 27.

Daughters of three Black Nobel Peace Prize winners were the featured speakers: Mpho TuTu, daughter of Bishop Desmond TuTu; Tandi Gcabashe, daughter of the late African National Congress leader Albert Luthuli; and Bernice King, daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. They joined Black rights leaders and students in calling for the economic and political isolation of South Africa and the release of African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela.

The crowd gathered on the steps of the memorial chapel, which is dedicated to Martin Luther King, Jr.

"We must put President Reagan on notice," said Bernice King, "that the South African 'reformist' government that he is referring to is buried in the sand of time. That the South Africa of today is not much different from the South Africa of 1948. That the only difference is that the voices of the unheard no longer cry out non-violently, but violently."

Tandi Gcabashe explained, "The writing is on the wall. South Africa is going to be free. We, the oppressed people of South Africa, do not have any doubt about that. The question is when and how."

"The struggle in South Africa now has become a children's revolution. It is the children who are making change in South Africa now," said Mpho TuTu.

It is the children, she said, who are out in the street, who are boycotting classes, and who are in front of the police armored trucks.

"There are six-year-olds in jail, eight-year-olds in jail, 10-year-olds in jail, because they said we're going to have our freedom," declared TuTu.

Student government leaders from Morehouse, Clark, and Spelman colleges of the Atlanta University Center (AUC) condemned Washington's complicity with the racist South African regime and called for more actions to help bring down apartheid.

President of the AUC Young Democrats, Tony Minor, announced that his group and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) will sponsor weekly forums on South Africa at AUC. They are also planning protests at companies with investments in South Africa.

"For years we have heard the word 'wait,'" said Philip Howard of Morehouse.

"Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging dart of segregation to say wait. But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers and drown your sisters at will; when you have seen hateful policemen curse, kick, and even kill your Black brothers and sisters; when you have seen the vast majority of your 20 million Negro brothers and sisters smothered in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you are forever fighting the denigrating sense of nobodiness — then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait."

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Behind scare campaign against AIDS victims

BY HARRY RING

New York's Mayor Edward Koch declares that no child suffering from AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) should be allowed to attend school.

Earlier, two of the city's community school boards vote that any child having AIDS — or suspected of having it — be barred from classrooms.

The Pentagon announces that all those enlisting in the armed forces must submit to a blood test to determine if they have been exposed to AIDS.

The insurance industry is reported as pressing to require AIDS blood tests of all insurance applicants.

The New York Catholic Archdiocese hastily drops a plan to convert a former convent into an AIDS shelter after some 10 percent of the parish involved petitions against it.

In Broward County, Florida, the city ad-

ministrator fires two municipal employees said to have AIDS.

Ambulette companies increasingly refuse to transport AIDS patients.

Funeral parlors charge as much as \$1,000 extra for handling the bodies of AIDS victims.

A secretary in a New York office mentions that two of her gay friends have AIDS. The personnel department demands she submit to a blood test.

In the Rockaway section of New York, a lawsuit is filed against a city plan to move 10 AIDS patients into a local nursing home. In a deposition filed with the suit, a doctor asserts that AIDS can be transmitted "by means of a few errant drops of urine left on a toilet bowl."

At a community protest against bringing in the AIDS patients, a speaker cries, "They will be ambulatory! They will be walking our streets!"

From the top brass at the Pentagon to the mayor of New York — with a major assist from the big-business media — unjustified fear and near hysteria is being promoted about the victims of AIDS.

Discrimination and victimization is mounting rapidly. In New York, Lambda, a legal organization for homosexuals, reports a "legal epidemic" of AIDS-related discrimination cases in housing, employment, insurance, and child custody.

The irrational response to AIDS flies in the face of medical knowledge. It is being used to deepen antigay prejudice and to erode the democratic rights of gays.

Scientists have established that AIDS is communicated only by direct sexual contact or the injection of blood bearing the AIDS virus. It is not "catching" from other contacts.

Such medical facts are brushed aside by

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BY CARL HUNTER

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Socialist workers here made a concerted push to get out the special Free South Africa issue of the *Militant* at area plant gates.

Textile workers, Teamsters, airline workers, and others were reached during 10 plant gate sales.

To do this, most *Militant* supporters went out twice, and everyone hit a plant gate at least once. Normally, we go to five plants a week with the paper.

Others went out during the week to political meetings and to the campuses. One team sold 18 papers at North Carolina A&T

State University, a large Black campus here.

At the Cone Mills White Oak plant, three workers bought the paper. One gave us her name and phone number so she could learn more about the ideas presented in the *Militant*.

White Oak, with 1,800 workers, is the largest mill in the Greensboro area. It is organized by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union.

At Highland Yarn Mills in High Point, two workers bought copies. One of them told us he planned to march on Lynchburg, Virginia — home of right-wing evangelist

Jerry Falwell — to participate in an NAACP-sponsored protest against Falwell's support for apartheid.

At Gilbarco, a subsidiary of Exxon that makes gas pumps, four workers bought copies of the paper. Exxon's big investments in South Africa are a topic of many discussions in the plant.

Our drive to take the special issue to the plant gates was based on the success of our regular, weekly plant gate sales. Since the beginning of the year, *Militant* supporters have sold 230 copies of the paper at area plant gates.

The special *Militant* also gave

us the chance to introduce the paper at plants where we haven't sold before and to reintroduce it at plants where we haven't sold for a while.

One of those is Fieldcrest Carpet Mills in Eden, where we sold regularly until this spring. Three workers there bought copies of the paper.

Since we were there last, Fieldcrest has laid off 500 workers from its bedspread plant next to the carpet mill.

During the week, sales teams also passed out hundreds of copies of a leaflet promoting the *Militant* Bookstore and the book, *South Africa: White Rule, Black Revolt*.



Militant/Nelson Blackstock

St. Louis: special 'Militant' sales push pays off

BY BOB MILLER

ST. LOUIS — Socialists here sold 460 copies of the special August 30 anti-apartheid issue of the *Militant* in the Black community, to coworkers, and to anti-apartheid activists.

Unionists who work at Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors assembly plants bought 135 copies.

The special issue of the *Militant* broke through the U.S. government and big-business media smear of the freedom struggle in South Africa, and highlighted the importance of building a massive, anti-apartheid movement in the United States.

Salespeople reported that people were eager to read the "Freedom Charter" printed in that issue. This is the program which has been adopted by the African National Congress.

Most people in this country have never heard of the African National Congress (ANC), the organization in South Africa that is leading the fight against apartheid. But many were interested in reading about it when told that Nelson Mandela, who has been in prison in South Africa since 1962, is a leader of the ANC.

Most members of the St. Louis Socialist Workers Party branch sold *Militants* on the Saturday the paper arrived. They sold 206 copies. They fanned out in the Black community and other places in the St. Louis area where the *Militant* has been sold regularly for more than a year.

One salesperson who kept at it for three-and-a-half hours sold 54 copies.

The next day the SWP branch had a discussion on the liberation struggle in South Africa. Discussions like these help socialists explain the developments in South Africa to people who buy the paper.

We found that Blacks, unionists, and students are angered by the terror of the white minority government in South Africa and want to do something to assist the struggle of the Black majority.

While selling the *Militant* we've distributed thousands of leaflets announcing demonstrations here against apartheid on October 11 and 12.

Some people said they wanted to join the local coalition that is building the demonstrations.

In the auto plants in St. Louis, unionists are working to involve the United Auto Workers (UAW) in building these actions.

At a Chrysler plant in Fenton, Missouri, 3,000 copies of an issue of *Ammo*, a UAW magazine, were distributed. It explains what apartheid is and why the UAW opposes it. These were distributed by officials of UAW Local 110.

The women's committee of Local 110 has endorsed the anti-apartheid demonstrations and donated \$50 to the coalition.

'Militant' prints South Africa supplement

BY HARRY RING

Sixty thousand copies of a special South Africa supplement to the *Militant* are now off the press.

A low-cost item, the four-pager can either be included with current issues of the paper, or sold and distributed separately.

The decision to put out the supplement was made on the basis of the positive response to the special issue of the *Militant* we published August 30, devoted to the swift rise of the South African revolution.

Because of our summer schedule that issue had not been slated to appear, but the South Africa events prompted us to get it out. The response confirmed we did the right thing.

Many Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance members and supporters were then just getting back from the SWP convention and some were finishing off their vacations. But 6,200 copies of the issue were ordered by SWP branches. A day of sales on the streets, and branches realized they needed more. An additional 1,400 copies were ordered.

Birmingham sold a record for that city of 230 copies. St. Louis scored 460 (see story on this page). Atlanta sold 250 copies. In Philadelphia, the incomplete count was 250. Oakland sold 230.

Socialists who are members of the local sold 35 copies of the *Militant* to coworkers. A Black woman worker, who has been reading the *Militant* regularly, sold four copies.

At General Motors Wentsville assembly plant, which is organized by UAW Local 2250, socialists sold 45 copies of the special issue.

A Black worker there who bought a subscription three months ago sold three *Militants*.

A socialist at the Ford plant in Hazelwood sold 47 copies of the *Militant* to other members of UAW Local 325.

The Greensboro, North Carolina, branch joined with the Newport News, Virginia, branch in setting up a literature table at an anti-apartheid mobilization in Lynchburg, Virginia. They sold \$100 worth of socialist books and pamphlets, including seven copies of the book, *South Africa: White Rule, Black Revolt*. Participants in the action bought 60 copies of the *Militant* and 30 of the *Young Socialist*, the monthly newspaper of the Young Socialist Alliance.

While South Africa has been the main focus of sales, it has not been the exclusive one.

In San Jose, California, for instance, socialists decided to sell *Perspectiva Mundial*, Spanish-language sister publication of the *Militant*, at a Mexico-Brazil soccer game. They displayed a big sign: "Cancel the Debt — Raza sí, migra no!" Forty copies of *PM* were sold in rapid order.

All of this adds up to an auspicious beginning for our fall circulation drive. We're aiming to sell 40,000 individual copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as 2,000 subscriptions. The drive runs from September 14 through November 16.

And, to keep our sales machine properly lubricated for this drive, which comes at so

A socialist at Hussman Manufacturing sold seven *Militants* to other members of the Steelworkers union.

During the week, salespeople returned to supermarkets in the Black community and visited college campuses.

Several papers were bought by activists in the local anti-apartheid coalition.

Every member of the branch had an opportunity to sell the special issue at least once.

In the coming weeks, we will be selling the *Militant* twice in the community each week and participating in a sale outside a workplace.

important a political moment, we've launched our \$125,000 Socialist Publication Fund.

As the title indicates, proceeds will help the vital work of publishing the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as our other publications and books and pamphlets.

To order copies of the supplement and to donate to the fund send in the coupon below with your donation.

☐ I want to donate to the Socialist Publication Fund. Enclosed is my contribution of _____. (Make checks payable to Socialist Publication Fund.)

☐ Send me _____ copies of the special 'Militant' anti-apartheid supplement at 5¢ each. (Make checks payable to the 'Militant'.)

* * *
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At the plant gates, picket lines, and unemployment lines, the *Militant* is there, reporting the news, participating in the struggle. To subscribe today, fill out the attached coupon.

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Miners end strike in face of racist attack

Continued from front page

system of white supremacy that makes millions of South African Blacks into foreigners in their own country and compels them to be migrant workers with no citizenship rights.

Black miners have forced the government and the mine bosses to formally concede their right to join a union. But the miners have no right to bargain collectively. Black miners must sign individual contracts with the boss.

One company official explained, "Miners sign a contract. They work for the mines in return for housing, food, clothing, and pay. If they withdraw their labor they are breaking the employment contract and, hence, we can move them off the mines."

Nor do Black miners have the right to strike. South African law allows mine bosses to fire Black workers for striking.

By law 97 percent of Black mine workers must be either from neighboring countries like Mozambique, Lesotho, and Botswana, or from the bantustans.

Rightless migrants

The bantustans are reserves where millions of Blacks are forced by law to live whenever their labor is not required in the 86 percent of the country reserved for whites. Black workers who are fired can be forced back to the bantustans or deported to their countries of origin.

Black migrant workers are not allowed to bring their families with them. Nor may they live where they wish. They are required to live in the hostels which are segregated by sex.

In the case of the mine workers, many of these hostels are on company property. The company claims the right to bar workers from assembling to discuss their problems on the grounds of the hostels, and the government backs up the mine owners.

Prisons for workers

As the strike date approached, the bosses built fences around the hostels. Security guards patrolled the perimeters in armored cars.

Even when no strike is in the offing, the hostels resemble prisons. In *South Africa: White Rule, Black Revolt*, Ernest Harsch writes:

"The hostels and compounds that migrant workers must live in are designed to hamper political organization, isolate the migrants from other urban Africans, and keep them under strict control. This description of one in the Transvaal, built to house 2,834 women, is probably typical:

"At intervals along the corridors were sets of latticed steel doors, electronically operated from a master switchboard in the matron's ground floor control room. It was specifically explained by Mr. Kotze [a government official] that these doors were nothing to do with fire control, but were there to enable the matron to seal off the building into 150-person sectors 'in the event of unrest.'"

"In addition to the control-board the matron's quarters contained a charge room and a barred cell. There were loudspeakers on all floors both for announcements and

"to control disturbances." All floors and corridors were controlled by "secondary matrons" equipped with portable two-way radios."

This setup has been worth billions to the mine owners. White miners are paid five or six times what Black miners get. No Black can obtain a miner's certificate. As a result only whites can be "miners." Legally Blacks are only helpers — "mineworkers" — although in fact they carry out virtually all mining jobs.

Black miners' lives are cheap under white supremacy. Between 1936 and 1966, more than 19,000 miners lost their lives in the mines. That's an average of three per shift. More than nine-tenths were Black.

Despite all these disadvantages, the NUM has been making headway. Black migrant mine workers are fighting for their rights and forcing some concessions. They are also taking an increasingly active part in the anti-apartheid struggle in the mining areas. The NUM has proclaimed boycotts of white-owned stores in the mining towns to protest the state of emergency imposed by the government of President P.W. Botha. The NUM has said it will strike if the government acts on its threat to expel miners who have come to South Africa from other African countries. Botha threatened to deport them if other governments start levelling economic sanctions against South Africa.

Massive protests

Protests against apartheid continue, despite the government's mass murder and arrests. The government figure for Blacks killed is now more than 675, and this is understated.

On August 31 about 70,000 people attended a funeral ceremony in Duncan Village, a Black township on the outskirts of East London. They were protesting the murder of 19 Blacks by the racist regime.

"Among those killed," reported the September 1 *Washington Post*, "were two boys, ages 13 and 11, and a 16-month-old baby who witnesses said died of asphyxiation when a tear gas canister was thrown into his house."

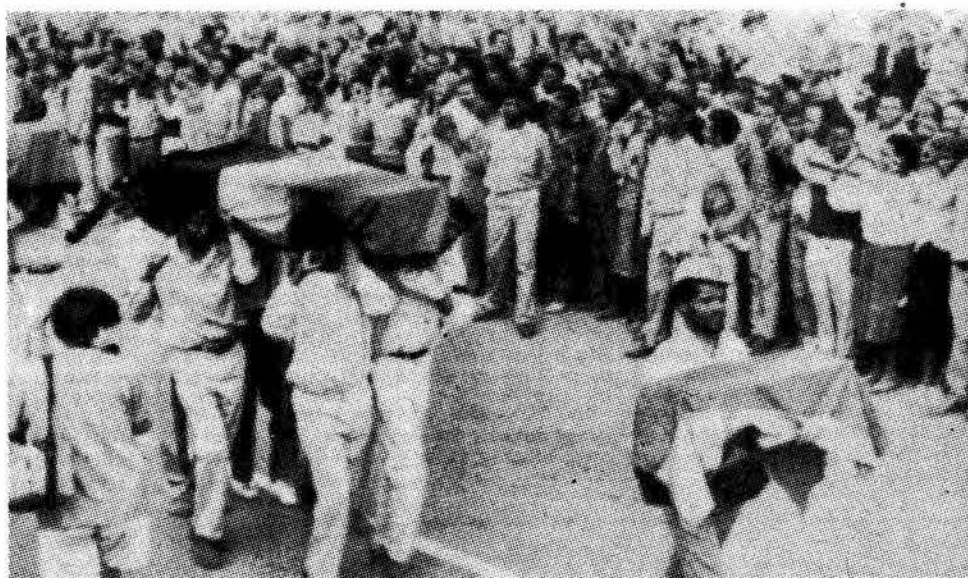
The gathering at this funeral protest was the largest since the government banned such events on July 31, and perhaps the largest in a year of growing revolt against apartheid.

While police made no move against the massive crowd, they tear-gassed the freshly dug graves in which the victims were to be laid.

Speakers at the funeral included Stephen Tshwete, regional president of the United Democratic Front. Tshwete spent 15 years in Robben Island prison for his opposition to apartheid. He has been banished by the regime to a remote corner of the Ciskei bantustan and evaded a police attempt to arrest him days before the funeral. But he spoke without interference.

A violent system

Tshwete reiterated the demand for majority rule. He stressed the right of Blacks to fight for their freedom by whatever means are necessary.



Some of 70,000 who protested apartheid at funeral of 18 killed by racist regime

"We are not going to be killed like this and say there is room for nonviolent struggle in South Africa," he said. "We can't allow a situation where our people disappear at night and still talk in terms of non-violent struggle. Apartheid is a violent system."

As the funeral participants were walking home, a carload of white racists attempted to run some of them down. Eleven Blacks were injured. Two of the racists were killed by outraged Blacks.

There are signs that big business around the world is beginning to lose confidence that the South African regime will be able to crush the mass struggle against apartheid.

On August 27 the Botha government shut down the country's stock and currency exchange. On September 1, shortly before reopening the exchanges, it imposed a four-month moratorium on payment of its foreign debt and imposed currency controls aimed at making it more difficult to withdraw capital from South Africa.

UN condemns apartheid

BY RASHAAD ALI

Responding to the South African "state of emergency" and the apartheid government's brutal crackdown on the opposition, a growing international movement is pressing to isolate the Pretoria regime.

Recently, world union bodies, other world agencies, and governments have condemned South Africa's racist repression.

For the second time in a month, the United Nations Security Council called on the South African government to lift the state of emergency and to stop "the continued killings and the arbitrary mass arrests and detentions carried out by the Pretoria government."

The UN council also reiterated its appeal for the unconditional release of political prisoners in South Africa — particularly Nelson Mandela.

Even stronger stands against the South African government were blocked by the United States and Great Britain. These included holding the South African government responsible for the burning of Mandela's home and an appeal for nations to initiate economic sanctions against South Africa.

Meanwhile, the president of the World Conference of Mayors, Mayor John Ford of Tuskegee, Alabama, said, "I'm sending out a call to mayors around the globe to take a firm stand against apartheid and racism in South Africa."

The 700 members of the mayors' conference, from 26 countries, were urged to help fight apartheid by prohibiting investment of city funds in corporations that invest in South Africa.

In Australia, the government said it will close its Trade Commission in South Africa.

Australian Foreign Minister William G. Hayden said the government would suspend most new investments in South Africa and would ask the banks and other financial institutions not to make loans to borrowers in South Africa.

In Canberra, the capital of Australia, more than 300 women demonstrated outside the South African embassy as part of an international day of solidarity with the women of South Africa and Namibia.

The Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia refused to unload a South African freighter in Sydney and other union members banned South African goods at an international exhibition in Melbourne.

In London, 250 people attended an anti-apartheid briefing held by representatives of the African National Congress and the South West African People's Organization. This meeting called for mass picket-

ing at the South African embassy.

Members of the Transport and General Workers Union in Southampton, England, refused to load machine tools bound for South Africa's weapons industry in late July.

Jim Slater, secretary of the National Union of Seamen, stated, "If the government is not going to stop arms equipment going to South Africa, it's up to trade unions to take action."

The Organization of African Trade Union Unity has called on all African unionists to join demonstrations for economic and diplomatic sanctions against South Africa.

Speaking as chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi supported a worldwide effort to "totally isolate the racists."

In this country, the Columbia University board of trustees will hear a recommendation from a panel of six trustees, October 7, that the university divest \$39 million of stock in corporations with operations in South Africa.

Pgh. anti-apartheid movement faces harassment, break-in

BY MARY NELL BOCKMAN

PITTSBURGH — The growing anti-apartheid movement here has come under attack.

On Saturday, August 30, more than 150 people joined the weekly picket line protesting the sale of the South African gold coin, the Krugerrand. They were confronted by a large number of hostile cops.

That night the film *Adapt or Die* was scheduled to be shown at a well-publicized Militant Labor Forum here. But sometime the night before, burglars broke into the Militant Bookstore and stole both the film and the equipment on which it was to be shown.

Other equipment at the bookstore was left untouched.

Made from tapes which had to be smuggled out of South Africa, the film depicts the struggle against the apartheid system. Anti-apartheid forces have scheduled a news conference to protest this attack and to announce plans to make sure that this film is seen in Pittsburgh.

Messages of support can be sent to the Militant Bookstore, Box 4789, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15206.

New!

This Monad Press book shows how the revolutionary workers' movement came to grips with the problems and challenges presented by the early years of the Great Depression. Cannon, founding leader of the CLA, describes how revolutionaries prepared for the massive upsurge of industrial workers that began in 1934.

439 pp., \$9.95.

Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include 75 cents for postage and handling.

James P. Cannon
WRITINGS AND SPEECHES, 1932-34

The Communist League of America 1932-34



Scare campaign hits AIDS victims

Continued from front page

the likes of Mayor Koch and the Pentagon.

In ordering the blood tests, the Pentagon acted so quickly it neglected to await the findings of a scientific panel it had assigned to weigh the issue.

Koch, a candidate for reelection who took his stand 10 days before the primary election, conceded there is no scientific evidence that AIDS can be casually transmitted. Instead he pointed to the possibility that there might be AIDS-infected children who can't control their bodily secretions, or who might bite other children.

After moving to bar the seven affected children from school, Koch scrapped the Rockaway nursing home plan.

Koch's readiness to pander to bigotry flies in the face of a pamphlet recently distributed to New York municipal employees.

The pamphlet states:

"AIDS is not highly contagious and it is not spread through every-day casual or nonsexual household contact. The virus is not spread through the air, in food or by casual contact at home, at work or in school. Associating with people with AIDS, or with members of high-risk groups, does not pose any risk of contracting the disease."

The Pentagon blood-screening decision is equally outrageous.

It will be required of all men and women enlisting in any branch of the services, military reserves, or ROTC. Those not clearing the test will be barred.

Just a beginning

A decision is also being weighed requiring that all present members of the armed forces submit to the test. Meanwhile, individual commanders are free to order it for their troops.

The blood test to be used can detect an

antibody which indicates that the person tested has been exposed at some time or other to the AIDS virus, or a similar one. It does not indicate if the person has or can transmit AIDS.

Because this test admittedly gives a high percentage of false indications, a second, more costly test, the "Western blot," will be given to enlistees who show signs of the antibody. A positive result in this test is considered reliable evidence that the person has the antibody, but not necessarily the virus.

A Pentagon spokesperson said, "We are aware of some allegations that this is a witchhunt designed to identify homosexuals in the military." This, he assured, is not so.

But a short while earlier, the Pentagon tried to require that blood banks which conduct drives at military bases turn over the names of GIs whose blood tests are positive. Protest by the Red Cross and other groups forced them to back off.

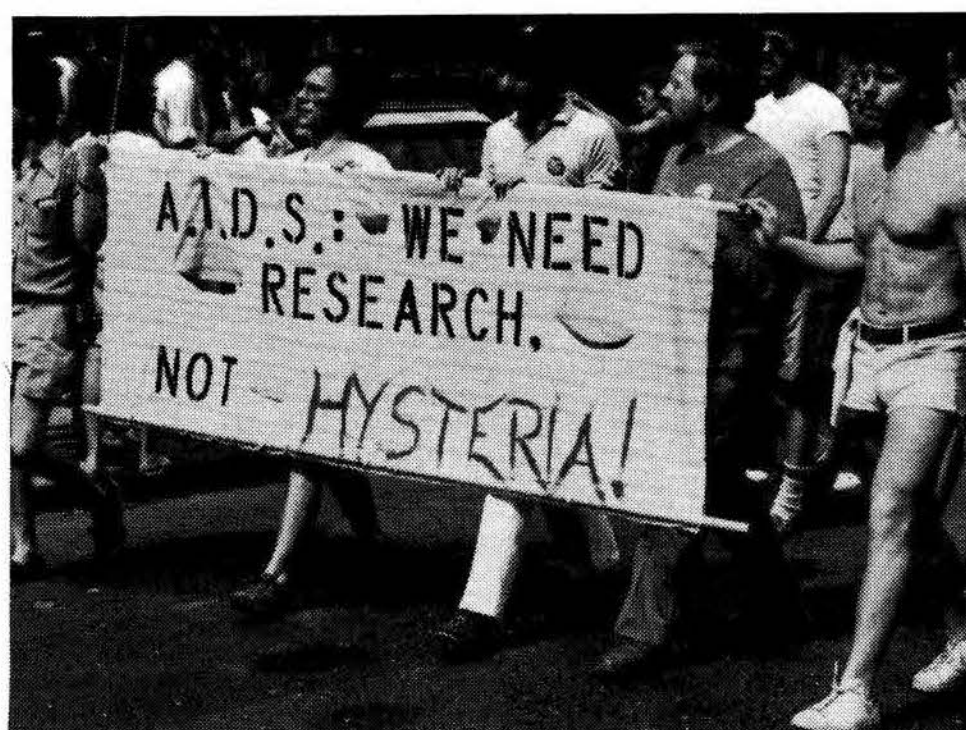
Several gay rights organizations have charged that the Pentagon blood test decision would set a precedent for private industry requiring such tests, promoting further discrimination against gays.

"There's no reason for this test to be given by the military unless a person is going to donate blood," a spokesperson for the National Gay Task Force said. He characterized the Pentagon decision as a "guise for discrimination."

The role of the Catholic Church hierarchy in relation to the AIDS issue has been particularly contemptible.

Perhaps to take some of the stench off its record of promoting antigay bigotry, the New York Archdiocese decided to turn the former convent into an AIDS shelter.

But the plan was scrapped a week later when a petition against it was signed by 400 of the 3,500 parishioners of the church



Militant/Cindy Jaquith

directly involved. The petitioners deemed it particularly inappropriate that a former convent was selected.

Then, after hastily deferring to the opposition, the parish priest, Kenneth Smith, chided the protesters for their stand, which left him "somewhat saddened."

(By no means was all the parish against it. One 40-year parish member, Rose Cozart, said, "It reminds me of the way people treated lepers back in biblical days.")

Source of prejudice

What's particularly cynical about the chastising of the parishioners is that the hierarchy has long promoted antigay bigotry among them.

Earlier this year, the New York Archdiocese rejected substantial city grants for the church's various social agencies rather than agree that such agencies would not discriminate against homosexuals.

This hard-nosed antigay stand is not limited to New York. In Rhode Island, Catholic church officials are currently spearheading a fight to defeat a gay rights ordinance before the Providence city council.

"Homosexual acts are contrary to God's command," intoned the area bishop.

Somewhat more earthly considerations are involved in the drive by the insurance industry to require AIDS blood tests of all insurance applicants.

"AIDS presents a potentially catastrophic situation," warned a report by the American Council of Life Insurance.

The potential catastrophe relates to dollars, not human suffering.

Declared a spokesperson:

"From the insurance standpoint, young people dying at an early time means we will be paying out death benefits before we collect the expected premium."

It would be hard to make it more gross. But the comment does help illuminate the relationship between the AIDS crisis and the capitalist society we live in.

From the outset, federal funding for research on AIDS has been meager. For 1986, the Reagan administration proposes that it be upped \$37.8 million for a total of \$126.3 million.

Testifying at a congressional hearing on this, public health officials agreed this amount would hardly begin to deal with the problem.

In addition to the urgently needed research, medical and outpatient care for AIDS patients suffers badly from official hostility and inaction.

The combination of bigotry and low funding intensifies the problems.

For example, in San Francisco, which is said to have the best system of outpatient service and housing referral in the country, the average hospital stay for an AIDS patient is reported as 12 days.

In New York, where support systems are minimal in terms of need, the average AIDS patient is forced to spend more than 50 days in the hospital even if during a good part of that time they don't need to be hospitalized.

And it's San Francisco, not New York, that's unique.

For instance, in Washington, D.C., there are a few hospices and residences to give nursing care to the terminally ill. But there is only one residence where outpatients can live as normally as their situation permits. It has a capacity of five.

The location of this residence is kept secret and the clinic that operates it bought a house to avoid landlord problems.

As that New York parishioner put it — the way they treated lepers in biblical times.

But the ignorance and irrational fears of biblical times were at least understandable in relation to the absence of scientific knowledge. Today, the problem is not a lack of scientific information. It is the problem of a society where insurance hustlers can feel free to complain about people dying before paying their full premiums. AIDS victims are truly suffering a double affliction.

What would a genuinely civilized society — a socialist society — do?

It would meet the AIDS problem head on. It would launch the kind of research program so obviously needed.

It would assure proper hospital and outpatient care.

It would use the authority of government to ensure that no government unit, no school or church, no employer or landlord could discriminate.

And it would conduct a resolute educational campaign to dispel groundless public fears.

Bigotry would be fought — not promoted.

SWP candidates on N.Y. ballot

BY BARBARA BOWMAN

NEW YORK — The candidates of the Socialist Workers Party will be on the ballot for the November 5 mayoral elections here.

The party's nominees are Andrea González for mayor, Rashaad Ali for city council president, and Pat Hayes for Brooklyn borough president.

Hailing certification of the ticket as a victory for democratic rights, Andrea González thanked supporters of the socialist ticket for their work in gathering nearly 11,500 petition signatures, almost 4,000 beyond the required number.

Nominating petitions were circulated at plant gates, among coworkers, at political events, and on the streets, mainly in the Black and Puerto Rican communities.

During the 15-day drive, campaigners distributed thousands of pieces of election literature, sold hundreds of copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, and organized several events to introduce the socialist campaign to new supporters.

The nominating petitions were filed in the midst of an unprecedented number of challenges to other candidates.

These challenges occurred within the Democratic Party, where candidates vied with one another in moving to disqualify the petitions of rival contenders for various offices in the primary election.

More than 100 candidates for minor and major offices were challenged, almost all on the kind of nitpicking technicalities permitted by a loaded election law.

Some of the challenges upheld by the board of elections were so gross that it lifted, if only briefly, the curtain on the basically undemocratic character of these laws.

With 7,500 signatures required to run for president of the city council, one candidate who filed 54,330 was disqualified because his cover sheet had understated the total by 21.

Another candidate for the office had his petition thrown out because of addition errors on the cover sheet.

One aspirant for a seat on the city council was knocked off even though she needed only 1,500 valid signatures and had

filed 4,250. Her cover sheet had overstated the total by one signature.

These are the kind of challenges that have often been used to disqualify socialists and other independent candidates. But the number of such patently raw challenges to major party candidates won wide media coverage and in the last days most of the disqualifications of the major capitalist candidates were reversed in the court.

The use of flimsy technicalities to disqualify candidates caused particular protest when Herman Farrell, a contender for the Democratic mayoral nomination who is Black, was challenged by City Council President Carol Bellamy. Like Farrell, she is challenging Mayor Edward Koch in his bid for reelection.

Four of the six Democratic nominees for the city council were initially disqualified. Three of the four are Puerto Ricans. All had to wage costly, time-consuming court fights to win a ballot place.

The Socialist Workers Party was among the first to score these violations of democratic rights and to insist that all candidates be put on the ballot.

The scandal around the use of the rigged election laws to restrict access to the ballot prompted declarations by major party politicians of the need to "reform" these laws.

Commenting on this, Andrea González predicted that while some changes may result, making it easier for those in the two capitalist parties to qualify for the ballot, there was also a risk that such moves would be used as a cover for further tightening the restrictions aimed at independent nominees.

The very function of these laws, González charged, is to deny ballot rights to workers' parties and to representatives of the Black and Latino communities who stand in opposition to the two capitalist parties.

González declared, "The only democratic ballot law is no law. There should be free access to the ballot by all who wish to run. Anything else inevitably discriminates in favor of the big-business politicians who want to hang on to their power."

2,000 in Atlanta: 'Free S. Africa!'

Continued from front page

"There is a new movement going on in this country and around the world," declared Mike Roth of the Black Law Student Association. "And we as the Black youth have got to be ready to meet that challenge."

"Don't compare this event with events in the civil rights movement," Roth continued. "Over here we were in the minority. Over there they are in the majority, and a switch to one man, one vote would mean an end to apartheid. And if you think [South African President P.W.] Botha and his slavemasters are going to peacefully relinquish control over the diamond and gold mines, then I have some beachfront property in Perry Homes that I would like you to look at." (Perry Homes is a public housing project where the police recently beat a Black man to death. See story, page 14.)

Roth urged all Black students to unite

and send a message to Botha and the U.S. government: "When they wake up the Black youth of America they wake up a sleeping giant and it's going to take a hell of a long time to put us to sleep."

ANC member David Ndaba, who is also a student at AUC, declared, "Just like the youth of this country rose up to dictate the foreign policy of the U.S. to pull out of Vietnam, so the youth of today dictate the foreign policy of the U.S. to pull out of South Africa."

Rally coordinator Kevin Valentine told the *Militant* that the rally was called by the student government, Young Democrats, SCLC, and Mayor Andrew Young's office.

Others addressing the rally were Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, City Councilman John Lewis, and Georgia State Senator Julian Bond.

Nairobi women's parley: 'No apartheid'

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

The struggle of the Black majority to overturn the apartheid system in South Africa dominated the two United Nations international women's conferences this summer. One was the official UN conference and the other was an "unofficial" conference called Forum '85. Both were held in Nairobi, Kenya.

At Forum '85, the workshops on apartheid were the best attended of the more than 1,000 that were held. Hundreds of women crowded into sessions organized by the United Democratic Front (UDF), an anti-apartheid coalition of more than 600 organizations; the African National Congress (ANC), the outlawed organization leading the struggle in South Africa; and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which is fighting for Namibia's independence from South Africa.

Overflow crowds

The rooms for these workshops were filled to overflowing; hundreds of women stood at the doors for hours hoping to hear the South African women.

When the time came for the final workshop on apartheid, led by the ANC, Forum '85 organizers moved it to an outdoor tent to accommodate the expected crowd.

As the ANC speakers were about to begin the sides of the tent were rolled up revealing some 1,000 women sitting on the grass outside to hear the workshop.

There was no sound system, yet no one moved during the two hours of presentations by ANC representatives.

At the break I spoke to a woman from Latin America. Although she knew no English and there was no translation, she had stayed "to give solidarity to the struggle."

Women came to these workshops to learn and to report on their activity against apartheid. Descriptions of campaigns in France, Germany, and Australia to force these governments to impose sanctions on South Africa were met with applause. But the biggest applause was reserved for the women from the United States.

Their descriptions of the picket lines at the South African embassy and consulates, the civil disobedience actions, and the campus struggles for divestment of university funds from companies doing business with South Africa were met with cheers and foot stomping.

Impact on women

Apartheid was also part of the discussion in other workshops.

The moving accounts by the South African women of the conditions they face under apartheid had a profound impact. Coretta Scott King hastily called a news conference after her discussions with South African women.

King said that "they [the women from South Africa] made me understand that the victims of South African militarism and barbarism on the majority population are little children and women." King denounced the "internal forced migrant labor situation that forces fathers and husbands to live far away for long periods."

Protest rally

As the end of the 10-day conference approached participants wanted to take some action to show their solidarity with the Black majority in South Africa. In an attempt to cut off any political protest, Forum '85 organizers first banned all demonstrations on the Nairobi University campus. When it became clear that this decision would be ignored, Forum '85 organiz-



Militant/Andrea González

Apartheid workshop at Nairobi women's conference. South African freedom fight was a dominant theme of world gathering.

ers then called a July 18 "Unity Rally" with no political demands.

But women turned the "Unity Rally" into a meeting to plan a march on the official UN conference.

Nawal 'El Saadwi of Egypt told the crowd, "We will... march to the UN conference to meet the people who make decisions and tell them what we feel about the injustice the human race is suffering because of policies which support apartheid..."

The Kenyan government banned all demonstrations in the city and Forum '85 convenor Dame Nita Barrow banned all protests on the campus. Despite these bans, women at Forum '85 did organize an anti-apartheid protest.

Pro-Israel disruption

The general unity at the forum workshops against apartheid was only threatened by supporters of Israeli im-

perialism who tried to stop Palestinian women from participating. The ANC acted to end this disruption. In workshop after workshop, ANC representatives explained that they welcomed the support of everybody but would not give up solidarity with the Palestinian people who were also fighting for their homeland.

At one workshop, a supporter of the Israeli government said that the Palestinian women lied when they accused the Israeli government of supporting the apartheid regime. Israel, she said, was the staunchest opponent of that regime.

Woman after woman — not only Palestinians but Danish, French, and Italians — exposed this claim. They listed the Israeli government's connections with the South African regime, including its cooperation with Pretoria on the development of nuclear weapons.

ANC — South Africa's delegation

At the official UN conference, which ran from July 15 to July 26, opposition to apartheid helped isolate the U.S. delegation headed by Maureen Reagan. Reagan attempted to limit the political discussion at the conference to what she called "women's issues." In the view of Reagan's group, any issue that challenged the U.S. government's foreign policy was not a women's issue.

Delegates from many countries, especially from Africa, denounced the U.S. delegation's attempt to remove apartheid from the agenda.

Sally Mugabe of Zimbabwe told a press conference that the apartheid regime oppresses the Black majority in South Africa and carries out aggression against her country and other neighboring states. Therefore, she said, apartheid had to be discussed.

The struggle against apartheid won an important victory at the UN conference. The ANC delegation, headed by Gertrude Shope, was officially seated for South Africa on the first day of the conference. This gave the ANC delegation the same rights as any government delegation.

1199 fights racist firings in Ohio

BY KATHLEEN DENNY

CINCINNATI — The National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, District 1199, in this city is waging a fight against Owens-Illinois, a giant corporation with operations in South Africa.

Owens-Illinois bought Oak Pavilion Nursing Center on July 1. The corporation's first action was to fire eight workers, without any hearing or explanation.

This is not an isolated example. In Pittsburgh, Owens-Illinois fired 130 workers in two nursing homes, and then notified the union that it no longer represented the remaining workers. Owens hired replacements for the fired workers after cutting starting pay by \$1 an hour.

All the fired workers at Oak Pavilion are Black. The overwhelming majority of those fired in Pittsburgh, as well as in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., are also Black.

Owens-Illinois has a record of racist policies, best illustrated by its operations in South Africa. Owens' subsidiary, Consol Limited, operates a glass and plastics factory in Johannesburg, where it exploits 5,000 Black workers.

In the United States, Owens-Illinois operates its nursing homes under the name Health Care and Retirement Corporation (HCR). HCR claims to be the sixth largest nursing home company in the country. It has 9,500 care beds in operation now, with plans to expand to 30,000 by 1988.

Nursing homes mean high profits. Apartheid also means high profits. Owens' racist, anti-labor policies are international.

HCR told the union here that it would recognize the 1199 contract, but it would not process grievances for the fired workers. It refuses to arbitrate, claiming it recognized the union contract only after the firings.

The union went on an immediate campaign to get the eight fired workers reinstated. A call went out to the Black community asking for letters of protest and warning that Owens-Illinois is trying to adopt South Africa-style labor relations in Cincinnati.

Harold Schlechtweg, 1199 organizer, told the *Militant*, "I know we're not going to get any justice in the legal system. We need to build some struggle with the workers and in the community. We're going to

smear Owens-Illinois all over this town."

On July 26, 1199 members from Cincinnati and Pittsburgh marched in front of Owens-Illinois international headquarters in Toledo, Ohio.

In Cincinnati, 50 people marched in front of Oak Pavilion on August 6, chanting, "Owens says apartheid! We say health care!" and, "Owens, Owens, they don't care. They want profits, not health care."

César Chávez, leader of the United Farm Workers, came from a picket relaunching the union's boycott of grapes and spoke to the demonstrators, linking the struggle of the farm workers with the fight for justice from Cincinnati to South Africa.

Dan Radford, president of the Cincinnati Central Labor Council, attended the demonstration.

Also picketing to support the fired workers were representatives of the Allied In-

dustrial Workers, Postal Workers, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Carpenters Union, Cement Masons, and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Rev. Maurice McCrackin, a longtime Black rights and peace activist, attended, as did members of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the National Organization for Women.

Harold Schlechtweg told the *Militant*, "If they hit, we have to hit them back harder. Make them say, 'If they did all this over eight workers, what will they do if we really go after them?'"

You can help by sending telegrams or letters demanding that the eight fired nursing home workers get a hearing. The address is: R. J. Lanigan, Chairman and President, Owens-Illinois, Inc., One Seagate, Toledo, Ohio 43666.

N.J. divests \$2 billion in pension funds

BY CANDACE WAGNER

TRENTON, N.J. — Two hundred people gathered here at the state house August 27 to cheer their victory in forcing the state government to withdraw \$2 billion in state pension funds from companies that do business in South Africa.

Labor officials, community activists, students, and Black elected officials watched Republican Gov. Thomas Kean sign the divestment bill which had been passed by the State Assembly. Many of the spectators had been part of the vigils and petitioning efforts that helped win this victory against apartheid.

"Today the state of New Jersey is adding our voice to those who are saying: 'No to Apartheid!'" stated Kean.

State Assemblyman Willie Brown, author of the divestment bill, vowed from the platform that this was just the first step. He announced proposed legislation which would require all universities receiving state funding to divest from companies doing business in South Africa.

Larry Cohen, New Jersey director of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) said that the 65,000 state workers represented by his union support divestment of their pension funds.

Rev. William Howard of the American Committee on Africa thanked the CWA and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees for their support. Howard is a leader of the broad-based Coalition for Divestment, which led the fight for the bill.

He also thanked the students of New Jersey who demonstrated and sat-in on campuses across the state last spring demanding that their universities divest.

At \$2 billion, the New Jersey pension fund divestiture is the largest announced so far in the country. It will affect investments in Johnson & Johnson, Exxon, Dow Chemical, Ford, General Motors, and other companies.

The evening news reported Wall Street's official response. This divestment "will not alter U.S. corporation policy in South Africa," though the action caused "anxiety in the marketplace" and had a detrimental "psychological effect." They called it: "symbolic with a capital S."

Immediately following the bill-signing ceremony, a meeting of the Coalition for Divestment was held at the CWA offices.

Participants included representatives from the CWA, United Auto Workers, Progressive Rainbow Coalition, Rutgers

University-New Brunswick Committee for Total Divestment, American Committee on Africa, and clergy.

The coalition agreed to work with others to organize anti-apartheid teach-ins.

On the heels of Kean's decision to sign the state divestment bill, the joint investments committee of Rutgers University voted to recommend divestment of \$7.4 million of stock in companies doing business in South Africa.

This decision came days before the opening of the fall term. The Rutgers-New Brunswick Committee for Total Divestment had already planned a month of anti-apartheid activities.

Students were widely credited with this week's divestment recommendation. A year of anti-apartheid protests culminated in a 32-day sit-in at Rutgers-New Brunswick last spring demanding total divestment.

Activists in the Committee for Total Divestment were happy about the recommendation. But, as Cristian Viveros, chairperson of the coalition's press committee, said, "There still has to be a vote [by the board of trustees and board of governors] and so we have to continue with our actions."

Wheeling-Pitt strikers greet USWA buses

BY HOLLY HARKNESS

CHICAGO — Five busloads of United Steelworkers members left the Chicago-Gary, Indiana, area on a 36-hour trip to show solidarity with fellow unionists on strike against Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corp. We left on August 25 and traveled to eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania.

District 31 Director Jack Parton had announced plans for the trip at the union's district conference at the end of July. The Wheeling-Pittsburgh strike is being watched closely by United Steelworkers of America (USWA) members. A defeat for the union would encourage the steel bosses to go after big concessions in the rest of basic steel. A victory would strengthen the entire union.

USWA members responded enthusiastically to the call for solidarity. Locals voted to contribute funds, and plant-gate collections were held at several mills. Rank-and-file members, local officials, staff representatives, and retirees made up the 169-person delegation.

Local 15721 at Danly Machine filled their own bus. Danly workers had firsthand knowledge of the need for strike support. The USWA fought a bitter nine-month strike there last year. They wore T-shirts saying, "Fight for my union? Damn right I will!" Their local raised \$600 for the Wheeling-Pittsburgh strike fund.

The trip included stops at USWA picket lines in Ohio and Pennsylvania. Pickets told us we couldn't have come at a better time. No scabs have been brought into the mills yet. But the company had just begun to try to move some steel and equipment out of the plants.

Our first stops were at plants along the Ohio River: Martin's Ferry, Yorkville, and Steubenville. We also passed the Mingo Junction mill on the way. At Martin's Ferry and Steubenville we held short rallies near the plant gates. After the speeches there was time to shake hands and ex-

change union buttons and picket signs.

The workers told us they were committed to a long, hard fight. They said they were getting a lot of support from local residents.

Our bus caravan was warmly greeted as we drove through the towns along the river. "Go Steelworkers" bumper stickers were a common sight on cars and vans along the route.

From Steubenville we headed into Pittsburgh for a rally at the USWA international headquarters, Gateway Center. Busloads of Wheeling-Pittsburgh strikers and their families joined us.

In his greetings to the rally Parton announced that \$29,337 had been raised so far from District 31 members to help the strike.

Local residents took the mike to announce their contributions. Dennis Adams, recording secretary of Local 1011, said that in four hours with six coffee tins, they'd collected \$2,000 from workers at LTV in Hammond, Indiana.

Local 1010 in northwest Indiana raised \$5,000 with more plantgate collections to be held in September.

Paul Gipson, president of Local 6787 at Bethlehem in Burns Harbor, Indiana, brought a check for \$13,384.

A Wheeling-Pittsburgh Solidarity Fund has been set up through the District 31 headquarters to solicit more funds.

After the rally we marched on Wheeling-Pittsburgh corporate headquarters located several blocks away.

The trip continued with a stop at Monessen, Pennsylvania. This is the site of the second largest Wheeling-Pittsburgh plant. We crowded into Local 1229's I.W. Abel Hall for a hot meal prepared by the union members and their wives.

"Lefty" Palm, director of District 15, spoke about the strike. "We're reasonable



Militant

people," he said. "We're willing to help the company out of its financial difficulties. But the banks and insurance companies wouldn't give up a penny. [Dennis] Carney [president of Wheeling-Pittsburgh] wanted it all to come out of the workers' hides. So we said 'enough is enough.'"

It was well after dark when we reached Allenport, Pennsylvania — our last stop. We drove past the tiny union headquarters. It had been a busy day for pickets there. From the rally in Pittsburgh they'd been

called up to Martin's Ferry where the company had tried to move out some steel. They were happy to report to us that no steel left the plant that afternoon.

We left the Monongahela Valley and headed back to Chicago. Our militant union brothers and sisters made us proud of our union and determined to spread the word.

Holly Harkness is a member of USWA Local 758 in Chicago.

5,000 rally in Pa. for Steelworkers

Continued from Page 20

Michigan used CB radios to tell independent truckers about the strike as they drove through the night.

In addition to the UMW, rally participants included members of the International Union of Electronic Workers, the United Food and Commercial Workers, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, United Auto Workers, and others.

Harry Lester, director of USWA District 29, reported plans for a united labor rally in Michigan September 19 to support the strike. Contributions from plant gate collections came from unions all over the area.

USWA Local 169 in Mansfield, Ohio, is collecting \$2,000 a week from workers

there. District 28 is distributing pledge cards with the slogan, "A dollar a day keeps the judges away." They presented a check for \$16,000 from this campaign and pledged weekly donations.

Dorothy Snyder, wife of a Steubenville striker and a former steelworker herself, pointed to the hardships that have already hit the 8,600 families on strike. "We have seen utilities shut off and food stores depleted, but our families were already suffering from the concessions previously forced on us. Now the time has come to fight."

The final speaker at the rally was Lynn Williams, international president of the USWA. He brought pledges of support from the USWA International and the AFL-CIO Executive Board.

Nicaragua hits 'contras' hard

Continued from front page

tion, who will never represent the free and honest citizens who are proud to be Nicaraguans."

As evidence of the demoralization of the mercenary army, Ortega reported an increase in the number of contra forces turning themselves in to the authorities under the amnesty program. Many are Nicaraguan peasants recruited by force or deception. The Nicaraguan government continues to offer them amnesty.

But Sandinista leaders have no illusions that a quick end to the war is in sight. Speaking to reporters after the ceremony, Ortega explained that the U.S. government remains determined to overthrow the legitimate, revolutionary government of Nicaragua. That's why it is increasing the funds sent to the mercenaries.

The mercenaries, in turn, are carrying out conspicuous terrorist attacks to earn their keep. Ortega described their actions as "desperate."

The counterrevolutionaries wanted, he said, to prevent orderly elections last November; to disrupt the coffee harvest in December and January; and to take and

hold a significant Nicaraguan city or town. They have been thwarted in their attempts to achieve any of these goals.

The contras now avoid confrontations with the Sandinista army. Instead they devote themselves to criminal attacks against the civilian population, killing and kidnapping peasants and destroying schools, clinics, and factories.

In recent months the FDN forces have shifted their ground somewhat. They have carried out fewer assaults in the northern provinces of Nueva Segovia, Jinotega, and Matagalpa nearest to their bases in Honduras. Their terrorist attacks in the central provinces of Boaco and Chontales have increased. Ortega described this as an attempt to get out from under the pressure put on them by the Sandinista People's Army in the north.

On the Costa Rican border, the CIA aims to rebuild a counterrevolutionary army based on the FDN to fill the void left by the "virtual disintegration" of ARDE.

Ortega predicted an increase in attacks on Nicaragua's southern border by mercenary forces based in Costa Rica. There have been five such attacks in the last two weeks.

Ortega is a member of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front and commander in chief of the armed forces. In his address to the nation, he expressed Nicaragua's determination to continue the drive against the counterrevolutionary invaders. He pointed out that the achievements of the Sandinista People's Army so far this year "will make it possible to multiply the impact of the military campaigns yet to come."

The goal, in the words of Commander Hugo Torres, is to "deepen the strategic degeneration" of the mercenary forces, "not to let them catch their breath, to defeat them." Torres is in charge of the political leadership of the Sandinista army.

In August the army began a new series of draft call-ups. Efforts are also under way to strengthen militia and army reserve units, both to collaborate with the army in the present campaign against the mercenaries and to defend the country against the possibility of a direct U.S. invasion.

"The triumph here will be political as well as military," Ortega explained. "We believe that victory will not be won only with guns, but also with diplomatic efforts, through the willingness to negotiate and Nicaragua's seriousness in the search for a solution."

"We don't want to brag about a political defeat for the United States," he said. "What we want is a triumph for reason, justice, and peace in the area."

'IP' serializes Castro talk on debt

A series of broadly representative regional meetings on the foreign debt crisis facing Latin American and Caribbean countries has been held in Havana, Cuba, this summer. The culminating event of the series drew over 1,200 delegates from 31 countries.

The next two issues of *Intercontinental Press*, dated September 23 and October 7, will reprint the full text of Cuban President Fidel Castro's talk to the closing session of this conference August 3.

Castro observed most of the conference's discussions, and his concluding speech refers to the contributions of many of the delegates — from businessmen to former government officials to church leaders.

The Cuban Communist Party daily, *Granma*, printed all the delegates' speeches in special supplements appearing every day of the conference.

Castro welcomed the recent Peruvian proposal to limit debt payments to 10 percent of the country's export earnings. But he

explained why even this plan would keep Third World countries perpetually in debt.

The current issue of *IP* carries Castro's remarks at one of the earlier debt meetings, along with a discussion by leaders of the Nicaraguan revolution on new pay policies designed to undercut speculation and unequal distribution.

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Fight to end apartheid and U.S. war in Central America focus of meeting

BY MALIK MIAH

OBERLIN, Ohio — "ANC!" "ANC!" "ANC!" chanted more than 900 delegates and guests attending the 33rd Constitutional Convention and Educational and Activists Conference of the Socialist Workers Party. The meeting was here August 10-15.

The standing ovation came after Neo Mnumzana, chief representative to the United Nations of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa, gave greetings to the convention. The ANC is leading the democratic struggle of the oppressed Black majority against the racist white minority rulers of South Africa.

The convention decided to make participation in the rapidly growing anti-apartheid movement a central priority.

Participants in the meeting included opponents of Washington's aggression against the people of El Salvador and Nicaragua; fighters for the rights of Blacks, Chicanos, Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, Asian-Americans, women, and the undocumented; trade unionists; farm activists; and 74 international guests from 10 different countries, including Kampuchea, Australia, South Africa, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Iceland, Britain, France, Canada, and Denmark.

A special guest was Susanna Ounei, the official representative of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front in New Caledonia. She was also a founder of the Group of Kanak and Exploited Women in Struggle.

Seven British coal miners also attended the convention.

A representative from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, the world socialist organization founded in 1938, also attended the convention and gave greetings. The SWP played a prominent role in founding the Fourth International, but due to reactionary legislation had to formally disaffiliate. It maintains fraternal ties.

For a free South Africa

Speaking on behalf of the ANC's National Executive Committee, Mnumzana stated: "The United States is interested in apartheid in South Africa, it's interested in reversing the revolutionary gains of the people of Nicaragua, it's interested in propping up fascist regimes all over the world. Wherever the United States has got its fingers, it sees those areas as bases, not only against the local populations, but as bases which form the chain of encirclement around the American people."

"Remember," he added, "that U.S. foreign policy is nothing but a logical extension of its domestic policies. If the United States supports repressive regimes this is only because the United States is repressive towards its own population. So when we fight the United States in the so-called out-



More than 900 delegates and invited guests participated in SWP's 33rd Constitutional Convention. Delegates decided to make fight against apartheid in South Africa and U.S. aggression in Central America central priorities of party.

posts on the periphery of imperialism, we are also fighting the United States on behalf of your freedom.

"And," he continued, "every advance we make — be it in Asia, Africa, Latin America, even here in the United States — that advance is indivisible. It belongs to all of us in the same way that every reverse also belongs to all of us."

Mnumzana also gave a class on the freedom struggle in South Africa. It was attended by 200 convention participants. He was scheduled to speak at the convention's windup rally but had to return to New York for another engagement.

Following Mnumzana's greetings, SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, reporting for the party's Political Committee, said the SWP will throw all its resources into building the anti-apartheid movement. (The report is reprinted on page 9 of this issue.)

Immediately following the convention — to help kick off this effort — the *Militant* produced an eight-page special anti-apartheid issue that included the ANC's "Freedom Charter." Members of the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance sold thousands of copies to coworkers and anti-apartheid activists across the country.

Turning the party outward

The decision to throw all the party's resources into this opportunity provided by the anti-apartheid campaign was in line with the major theme of the convention's resolutions, reports, workshops, and meetings of socialist unionists: *turning the party outward*.

Over the last year the party has been discussing two documents: "The Revolutionary Perspective and Leninist Continuity in the United States" and "The Workers' and Farmers' Government in the United States: An Alliance of the Exploited Producers." (Both appear in the Spring 1985 issue of the *New Internationalist*.)

These two documents were adopted by the August 1984 party convention. After editing, they were rediscussed by the party branches and adopted by a special convention in January 1985.

The two documents take up the major political questions facing working people today and outline the line of march working people must take to conquer political power in this country. The resolutions also discuss the next steps in building a revolutionary working-class party in the United States.

Prior to the August convention the party's National Committee adopted two

reports: "The State of the Farm Movement in the United States and Party Tasks" and "The State of the Unions and the Party's Industrial Union Fractions." These reports, which elaborated on sections of the political resolution, were based on the party's experiences over the last year.

Reporting to conference participants on the opening night, Margaret Jayko, managing editor of the *Militant*, said that the discussions in the party branches leading up to the convention prepared the SWP to respond to the upsurge of the freedom struggle in South Africa and to the war drive of U.S. imperialism in Central America and the Caribbean.

Jayko, reporting for the convention delegates, said the party's number one aim coming out of the convention is to make further advances in turning the party outward politically.

Revolutionary perspectives for the United States

The opening night meeting was chaired by Rashaad Ali, who has recently joined the *Militant* staff and is the SWP's candidate for city council president in New York. Ali introduced the main speaker, SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. Barnes' presentation touched on many of the themes that were to be covered in the convention reports, workshops, and classes.

The Sandinista hymn declares that the Yankee imperialists are the "*enemigo de la humanidad* — enemies of humanity" — Barnes began. But "this is not just a song, it's a fighting anthem of a fighting people. This is an accurate description of the most reactionary power on the face of the earth — the United States of America. It is the bastion behind which all exploitation, oppression, and tyranny is carried out," he said.

The United States, he added, is a difficult country to understand, both from the outside and from the inside. The way class relations appear masks the reality of the country.

Most people believe, he said, that the laws of capitalism and class struggle don't apply to the United States. Some even say that the industrial working class is disappearing and that robots are taking over everything. They believe that unions are part of society's problem; that working farmers are small capitalists; that most Blacks are "making it"; and that women fighting for their rights are evil.

In other words, he explained, it is

pushed that the U.S. rulers are all-powerful and a revolutionary perspective for the United States is impossible.

"But the facts," Barnes explained, "give a different picture. The class struggle is deepening in the United States because the laws of capitalism are unfolding here with a vengeance. Great battles are being prepared, even though not consciously by very many workers or those claiming to speak for them at this moment."

"The three pillars," Barnes pointed out, "that make up the social relations of production in the United States are the wages system, the rents and mortgages system, and the colonial system."

He explained that the rulers' offensive is greatest on the ideological front. Its goal is to prevent working people from distinguishing between their friends and enemies and to block them off from their potential allies.

Class segregation, racial segregation, and female dependence, he said, are key to convincing working people to internalize their exploitation and oppression — to turn them into faults of their own.

Changing structure of working class

Barnes noted that the structure of the working class is changing, as it has since the rise of capitalism. But these changes do not mark the withering away of the industrial working class.

He pointed out that the percentage of workers in manufacturing compared to the service industries is similar to what it was 100 years ago. What has changed is that broader layers of the population are being drawn into the work force.

"The percentage of the labor force that is female continues to grow," he said. "The capacity of women to fight their way into jobs previously closed to them is transforming the value of labor power of all workers. The percentage of oppressed nationalities in manufacturing continues to increase."

"It is not the bourgeoisification of the working class as a whole," Barnes explained, "but the proletarianization of layer after layer of working people of every kind that has marked, and continues to mark, American history. The hereditary proletariat as a percentage of the population of this country is larger than it has ever been any time in American history."

"What has been created," he said, "is a giant majority class that has only one thing: our ability to continue adding to the wealth of humanity by selling our blood, muscle, brain, and bone to them."

The introduction of new technology such as robotics is not raising the skill level of workers, Barnes emphasized. "We're tied to the machines," he said. "We don't use machines, they use us. We're *de-skilled*. Our lives are reduced to how much time they can make us work, faster and faster."

Role of trade unions

The basic condition of workers, Barnes said, is one of competition — fighting over jobs in order to live. Trade unions were formed to combat this competition imposed on workers by the capitalists.

Karl Marx, Barnes said, explained that trade unions began as organizations attempting to ameliorate the wages system not as ones fighting against the system itself.

Our task, Barnes said, is the same one Marxists have always had — to fight to transform the unions into instruments where workers think socially and act politically.

"The trade unions, Marx said, must learn to act deliberately and for the broad interests of the working class. They must enlist in their ranks unorganized workers. They must pay attention, special attention, to the interests of the worst-paid trades, such as agricultural laborers and others rendered powerless by political, social, and other factors," Barnes pointed out.

"And finally, the last thing that the foun-

Continued on next page



Neo Mnumzana, chief representative of the African National Congress at the UN.

Militant photos of the SWP convention by Osborne Hart, Holbrook Mahn, Janet Post, and Harry Ring.

'Nicaraguans are on the front lines'

Continued from previous page

der of the modern communist movement said is that the trade unions of the future — if they are to accomplish the job that history has laid before them — must convince the entire world that their efforts, far from being narrow and selfish, aim at the emancipation of the downtrodden millions.

"That was Marx's view of what they have to do," Barnes emphasized. "That remains exactly the task in front of us today." The only way to end the wages system is to take political power out of the hands of the ruling capitalist families.

Rents and mortgages system

This is also true for ending the rents and mortgages system and colonial system, he said.

Working farmers are debt slaves, like the oppressed and exploited peoples of the semicolonial countries. Working farmers are steadily being proletarianized, not bourgeoisified. They can't become small capitalists.

Like workers, working farmers, he said, are not paid for the full value of labor power they put into the commodities they produce. Their unpaid labor is expropriated — stolen from them — by the owners of the banks, land, and trusts through the medium of the rents and mortgages system.

The exploitation of the farmer differs from that of the worker only in form.

The colonial system too, Barnes explained, leads to the superexploitation and oppression of peoples dominated by imperialism. This is why Cuban President Fidel Castro's call for the cancellation of the foreign debt — a just proposal — is so well received in the semicolonial world. This debt is unpayable and uncollectable.

This is true for U.S. farmers too. This debt is a form of tribute paid to the capitalists.

U.S. is last enemy of humanity

The revolt of the debt slaves here and abroad is an important part of the fight against the enemy of humanity — the U.S. rulers — Barnes said.

But "the United States is not simply the 'enemigo de la humanidad,'" Barnes said. "It is not simply the great reactionary bastion of the last stage of class history. It is the last enemy of 'humanidad' that will ever appear on the face of this earth.

"We have a convergence, a convergence of a new kind of history," Barnes said, "of the battle against the wages system, the battle against the rents and mortgages system, the battle against the colonial system. You have a convergence of the battle for women's rights, against racism, and against national oppression." It begins coinciding with and involving in their leadership members of the working class and leaders of these political struggles.

The capitalists "don't want to drive you out of your job — that's not their goal. They are trying to take away your politics.

"They try to take our souls by taking our politics and our party. But ultimately and finally, it is we — the working people of the United States — who can and will bring down the enemy of humanity," he concluded.

The fight against U.S. war drive in Central America

Mary-Alice Waters reported for the National Committee on the fight against the U.S. war drive in Central America. She said the front line of the battle against the enemy of humanity is in Central America. Therefore, the fight against Washington's war drive is a priority of the party.

She noted the significance of the April 20 antiwar demonstrations, which drew 125,000 people in Washington, D.C., and five other cities. They represented "a real turning point in the development of a mass action movement against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean." She pointed to the significant involvement

of trade unions.

Waters elaborated on the following points:

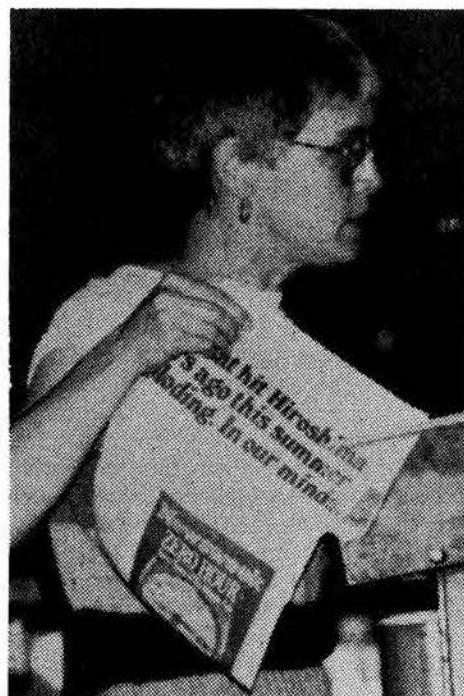
- Washington's policy in Central America and the Caribbean, especially in relationship to Nicaragua.

- Washington's broader militarization drive.

- The SWP's proletarian military policy in today's context, including the U.S. rulers' draft-registration policy.

- How to advance the building of an antiwar action movement that opens the door to involving growing layers and organizations of the working class.

In particular, she discussed the importance of orienting the movement toward the unions and the most oppressed and militant strata of the working class — especially



Mary-Alice Waters

Blacks, Chicanos, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, and their organizations. In addition the movement should orient to women's rights organizations, youth, and workers and farmers in uniform — GIs.

Center of world class struggle

"All other battles that we and our class are involved in today are affected by the deepening confrontation in Central America and the Caribbean," Waters said.

"As the workers and peasants of Nicaragua and El Salvador continue to advance along the road of winning the leadership of the revolutionary processes, as the Cuban workers and peasants did a quarter century ago," she said, "the conflicts throughout Latin America between imperialism and the oppressed and exploited peoples will sharpen.

"We are heading toward even more decisive tests and more decisive battles than those that we have already witnessed in the last six years. That is the character of the historic confrontation that is taking shape throughout the entire region.

"Everything we have done and continue to do," Waters continued, "is based on this fundamental assessment of the contending class forces, of the irreconcilable character of the conflicting class interests, and of the leadership capacities of the proletarian vanguard parties that are being forged in these battles.

"U.S. imperialism will not be able to retain its domination of Latin America by using surrogate military forces, economic aggression, and the weak bourgeois ruling class of Latin America," she said.

To the contrary, as Cuban President Fidel Castro explains about the debt crisis, Latin America is a volcano getting ready to erupt.

Imperialism, Waters explained, "will have no choice but to try to control that revolutionary volcanic eruption. The confrontation taking place in Nicaragua and El Salvador and the rest of Central America today is part of this historic struggle for national liberation of the continent from U.S. domination.

"Nicaragua is on the front line of that battle precisely because it is advancing the

farthest and the fastest at the moment." Imperialism must make Nicaragua pay a price for its national sovereignty.

But what Washington can do is tied to the relationship of class forces in Central America, in the United States, and other parts of the world.

Thus, she said, there is "nothing inevitable" in the outcome of this historic confrontation — except the struggle itself.

Assessment of errors

Leading up to the convention the party's Political Committee corrected several errors in how the party explained the U.S. imperialist war drive and the situation in Nicaragua.

The main error centered on saying that it was inevitable that Washington would send ground troops into Nicaragua.

But "we cannot predict," Waters said, "what is going to happen. The Nicaraguans cannot predict what forms the struggle will take, what forms the confrontation will take. Washington cannot predict it.

"All we can do is to know the nature of the beast, to be prepared for anything, to organize the maximum strength that we can possibly mobilize against the policies of the U.S. ruling class, and to fight like hell to prevent them from doing what they are going to try to do. That is all that is inevitable."

She pointed to what lay behind the error: "We all know what the logic of the struggle is. But our error was in collapsing the logic of where the struggle is going into a tendency to look at it as a short-term logic — short-term categorical imperatives and tactical predictions of what the U.S. rulers would do and must do."

This, she said, also implied that advances made by the Sandinistas against the U.S.-sponsored mercenaries would speed up direct intervention. But actually, every victory sets back such an invasion because each success raises the stakes for Washington.

The U.S. ruling class, she said, is divided over whether to directly use military power at this time to overthrow the Sandinista government.

What the rulers are united around, she said, is the conviction that an accommodation with the existing Nicaraguan government is not possible. It must be changed.

How this is to be done, and at what price, are the questions.

The logic of the conflict is heading toward Washington using massive ground troops to invade Nicaragua. But this does not mean it is inevitable.

Washington right now is worried about the massive freedom struggle in South Africa that is threatening that imperialist bastion of reaction on the African continent. This struggle aids the Nicaraguan revolution.

Another reason for the party's error, Waters explained, is the "uncertainty of the situation." It is hard to live with the fact that nothing is settled.

The Cubans have been living with it for 26 years, she said. "As Castro explains, the

Nicaraguans have been facing 'Playa Giron' day after day, month after month." (Playa Giron was the unsuccessful 1961 CIA-organized "Bay of Pigs" invasion of Cuba.) This, Waters said, is a "wearing and grinding pressure" on the Nicaraguan people themselves and their supporters.

Another side of the error, she said, was "the tendency to reduce the confrontation to simply one of Nicaragua versus the United States." If regional and international factors, such as the upsurge in South Africa, played no role, she said, an invasion probably would be inevitable.

There has been a shift to the right in ruling-class circles on Nicaragua, she noted. This is symbolized by the congressional support for open funding of the *contras* and the adoption of a resolution stating when the U.S. government can use ground troops in Central America.

But these shifts don't equal a decision to carry out the logic of the imperialist war drive, Waters said. That's why *actions now* by opponents of Washington's aggression are so important. They can make a difference in the outcome of the historic battle unfolding in Central America.

Militarization drive in U.S.

The flip side of the war drive abroad is the militarization drive at home. This drive primarily takes the form of increasing use of the antiunion "security" clearances issued by the Pentagon and the nationwide spy scare being whipped up by the government and the big-business media.

The spy-hunt campaign, Waters said, "is aimed first and foremost at working people in and out of uniform. It is aimed at silencing opposition within the armed forces and intimidating militant workers in the war-production plants here, and breaking down union job protection."

This has led to the introduction of at least four new antispy bills in Congress. Their purpose, she said, is to restore the "peace time" death penalty in the military and for civilians.

More opportunities to build movement

But as this is happening — as the rulers shift their politics to the right — Waters explained, there are new opportunities to advance the development of an action-oriented antiwar movement. It is more possible to involve those social forces that have the power to tie Washington's hands: the working class, especially those layers that are also victims of racist and national oppression; working farmers; youth; women; and GIs.

"Working people," Waters emphasized, "are beginning to see more clearly the interconnections between the bosses and the offensive against the unions and working conditions, wages, job rights, and social services. They are seeing the interconnections between the brutal escalation of pressure on working farmers and what the rulers are doing to the working people of Central America, South Africa, and the Middle East.

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The Workers' and Farmers' Alliance in the U.S.

Articles by Jack Barnes and Doug Jenness

Land Reform and Farm Cooperatives in Cuba

- Resolution of Cuban Communist Party
- Two speeches by Fidel Castro

Revolutionary Perspective and Leninist Continuity in the United States

Resolution of the Socialist Workers Party

'Our task above all is to tell the truth about South Africa'

The following report from the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party was presented to the delegates and invited guests at its August 1985 convention. Immediately before this report, Neo Mnumzana, chief representative of the African National Congress to the United Nations, presented greetings and a report on the situation in South Africa.

BY JACK BARNES

There are times when politics becomes simplified — when what you've been working for, organizing for, and preparing for becomes much more possible to do, and to do effectively. This is clearly one of those times.

It is important for us to step back and think about what has been happening just during this week since the convention began, so that we can have a better feel of what is possible for us to do when we leave here, and what it is that we *will* do.

There has been a change in South African politics since we arrived here a little less than a week ago. The struggle has deepened. The stakes have gone up. Talk of "compromise solutions" with the apartheid regime have become less believable. The modern slavemasters have been put more on the defensive. A new generation of revolutionaries and revolutionary workers have deepened their experience in struggle. And there is every reason to believe that this pattern will continue.

These events have been reflected in public steps by even the bourgeoisies of many countries, all of whom hope to stave off the overthrow of the apartheid regime. Yesterday, the government of Argentina denounced the South African apartheid system and pulled out its chargé d'affaires. Even Pretoria's kindred colonial-settler regime, the Israeli imperialist regime, had to denounce the evils of apartheid. The newspapers have reported numerous other diplomatic moves by various capitalist governments that up until now have maintained normal relations with South Africa.

This pace of events puts a spotlight on our responsibilities in this country. The recent developments in South Africa have resulted in a significant change in U.S. politics, as well. When we left to come here to the convention last week, we didn't know that 30,000 people were going to pour into the streets in New York City in response to an emergency appeal issued by more than 50 unions and other organizations. We had already left before the demonstration of 2,000 in Atlanta, and the one of 6,000 outside the State Department offices in Washington, D.C.

We couldn't have predicted how quickly things were going to open up. But we now have every reason to act on the anticipation that what we are seeing will continue and grow over the coming months. In the face of what's happening in South Africa, every human being in the United States — not only revolutionaries, but anyone with a decent bone in their bodies — has the obligation to do everything they can to help accelerate this process.

It has become more difficult for any union in this country not to endorse actions in solidarity with the fight for freedom in South Africa. It is more difficult for any large organization, any group, not to endorse an anti-apartheid protest. And it is difficult to believe that the opening of the school year a couple of weeks from now will be business as usual. More than a handful of campuses will open as "Free South Africa universities" this fall.

We operate on these assumptions.

Because of the new situation, there will undoubtedly be all sorts of protest activities in the immediate weeks ahead. The momentum from what we've seen just in the past day or so will continue to spread. And all these activities will build toward the October 11 anti-apartheid actions that have already been called, as well as the October 25-26 actions against U.S. interven-

tion in Central America and the Caribbean. The fight for a free South Africa and the campaign to break all U.S. ties with the apartheid state will become part of all the activities we're participating in this fall as part of the national Jobs, Peace, and Justice Coalition. This is an opportunity to throw every single thing we have into this fight. That is our decision.

We take this movement as it is. We take the action coalitions that exist as they are. We take the people and organizations who are moving into gear around this issue as they are. We take the union movement as it is, with its structure as it is. We get on board, and do everything humanly possible to advance the understanding about, and active solidarity with, the struggle of the South African people.

Fidel explains that the Cuban revolution was able to survive because of the struggle of the Vietnamese people. It was Vietnam's liberation struggle that gave the Cuban people the time to develop their revolution, their economy, their defense capabilities, their political understanding and selfless internationalism.

Today, the people of South Africa are giving the whole revolutionary world a better chance to survive, develop, and fight. What is developing in South Africa is Nicaragua's greatest aid — its greatest ally.

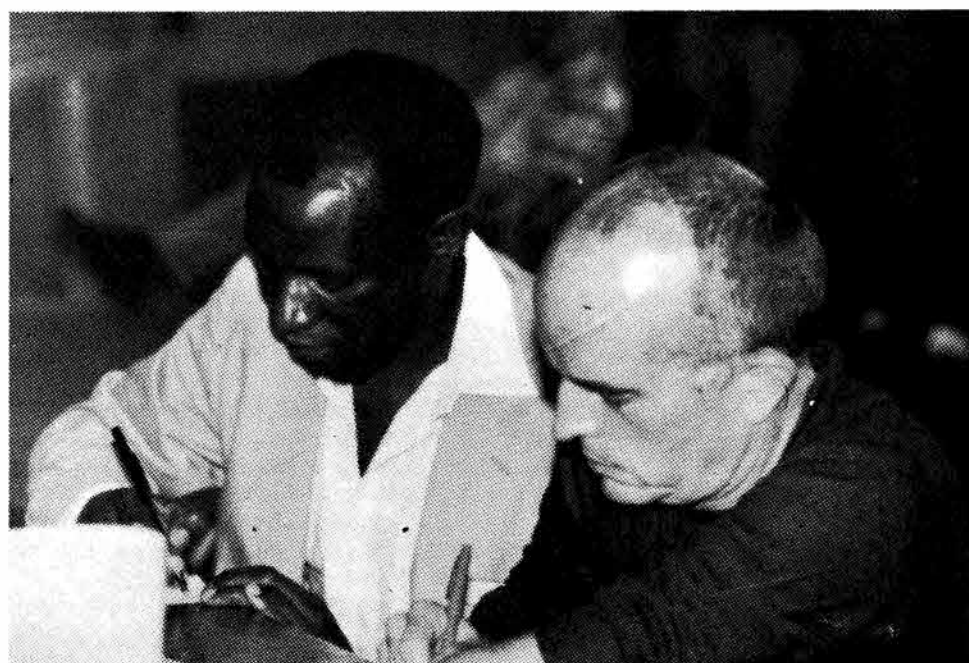
What Neo explained to us a few minutes ago could not be more true. Every organization, every union, every worker, every individual who goes into action for a free South Africa in the coming days and weeks also goes into action for Nicaragua, for Vietnam, for Cuba, for the toilers of the world.

Enormous potential

We must grasp to the end the enormous potential strength of this movement — its breadth and depth. The breadth and depth of support in this country for the great, great majority of a nation that is simply taking their freedom, simply taking their freedom to create a democratic state and to become a nation. No single courageous act could inspire such breadth of support around the world as this struggle by an entire people. No single heinous opponent could arouse the international movement that has emerged with the goal of bringing to its knees this modern slavocracy, a slavocracy with a Nazi mentality and cop machine. That is the reality of the racist apartheid regime. We must grasp what this means, and help carry out the unstinting, uncomplicated effort that can turn this breadth of support into *action* against this outlaw of the modern world.

[Karl] Marx and [Frederick] Engels never tired of teaching that the working-class vanguard must understand that it takes the moral high ground in the great conflicts of the world. It sets the example for the world of how to fight for those who are resisting the horrors that outmoded classes have produced. The key to this developing fight in solidarity with the South African people will not be the exact slogan raised in some demonstration, or who ends up on what subcommittee from some union. The key is for all those who are revolutionaries to lead others *by example*. That's what we will go out of this convention ready to do.

The decisive thing in South Africa today is politics — the question of state power. That's the decisive question in South Africa. The right to establish a democratic state in order to build a nation. It is by accomplishing this that the majority will win freedom, land, labor rights, the wealth of the nation for the nation. Every action, every demonstration, every battle, every martyr's blood feeds into that one goal. The question is not one of economic forms, not the exact social measures that a free South Africa will carry out. The question today is *achieving* a free South Africa, and bringing the entire world to bear to help it come into being. A free South Africa will



ANC leader Neo Mnumzana (left) and SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. "In face of what's happening in South Africa," Barnes told convention, "every human being in the United States has obligation to do everything they can" to fight apartheid.

take care of organizing its own affairs, and it will inspire the whole world in the process.

This is the time for us to have the courage of our convictions and of our observations. We have talked a lot about the U.S. working class, about the unions, about Black America, about farmers, about youth, about women, about everyone among the oppressed and exploited who wants something to fight for, especially after the last five years of being knocked around from this side and that side by the employers and the government. People in the United States who go into action around this issue are not only going into the streets for a free South Africa. They are going into the streets for themselves, for a fight against everything that's being done to them, in whatever way. Every cutback. Every plant shutdown. Every cop killing. Every bombed-out abortion clinic. Every reactionary pressure they've had to face.

We need to keep in mind the brutal treatment that working people have been subjected to in the recent past. How coal miners who work for A.T. Massey, and other United Mineworkers members, are prepared differently to respond to this question today than they were a year or two ago. How coal miners in Britain are better prepared. How working farmers are better prepared. How *we're* better prepared than we were several years ago.

Above all, we have a special obligation as a workers' party in the United States. There is no limit to the involvement of the U.S. labor movement in this struggle, as it develops at whatever pace and with whatever ups and downs. The degree of labor participation will be determined by the courage, the initiative, and the simple decision by unionists to say, in the simplest manner possible, "Our unions should join in this fight. We should endorse this action. Let's get going." There is no other limit.

Break all ties

Our goal is for the racist apartheid regime to become the common target of every working person, of every democratic-minded person, of every progressive organization in this country. Our goal is to force the U.S. government — the reactionary power that ultimately stands behind apartheid — to break all ties, *of any kind*, with the South African regime. To make it an international outlaw. We want to answer the lies, to convince every possible person in this country that this should be done. We want to help convince them to move into action, to see that it *is* done.

Neo told us about the decisions of the June Consultative Conference of the African National Congress in Lusaka. That is a further demonstration of the conquest of the vanguard of the toiling classes, of the political leadership of a generation that is utterly confident, that is building a movement, a workers' movement that matches up to the revolutionary task before it.

Our task is much simpler.

We're interested in something different from what the U.S. ruling class and its spokespeople are interested in. They are interested in whether there are communists in the leadership of the ANC and the place of

the South African communist movement in the events there. We have no interest in these questions. They are fake questions, a diversion for the movement.

Instead, we are interested in explaining that the ANC program deserves the support of everyone, of every working person, of every fair-minded person, of every democratic-minded person, of every person who believes that modern forms of slavery are no longer acceptable to the human race, and that those who practice them must be swept aside by any means necessary. We are interested in explaining that the Freedom Charter embodies the demands and goals of the people of South Africa and deserves the support of the people of the United States. The ANC is leading the struggle in South Africa and it deserves the respect and collaboration of all those here and around the world who want to play a role in bringing down the apartheid regime.

We must assume nothing about what our coworkers, students, and readers of our press know about the apartheid system and the struggle to overturn it. Our task above all is to help get out the *facts*. To explain the truth about the multiple forms of oppression and repression under apartheid, and its effects on the lives of 25 million African, Coloured, and Indian people in South Africa. To explain the truth about the movement in South Africa, about its history and its goals, about the mass organizations that are fighting to bring down apartheid. To explain the truth, which working people in this country need to disentangle all the lies and misinformation they are bombarded with in the papers, on television, and over the radio. To explain, above all, the simple, concrete, week-to-week truth about the living movement unfolding in South Africa.

This simple truth will set millions in motion in solidarity as the struggle deepens in South Africa.

Our aim should be to provide our coworkers and fellow unionists, students on the campuses, and everyone we can reach with *facts*. If ever there were a time to patiently discuss, this is it. And on that solid foundation, to organize and to act. That's what has been opened up by these new developments in the South African struggle, and their impact in this country and around the world.

It is along this road that the battle for national liberation, that the battle for freedom and democracy, that the battle for the world revolution is being fought. It is along this road that a new international working-class leadership worthy of the tasks posed at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century is truly being forged. And it is only along this road that it can be forged.

I am confident that everyone here joins in pledging to our comrades and our brothers and sisters in South Africa that the thousand members of our movement — of the SWP, the YSA, and our supporters — will do everything in our power to set an example of education and action with all those who are ready to advance the struggle to force the U.S. government to end its reactionary support to — and break all economic, military, political, cultural, and sporting ties with — the racist apartheid regime in South Africa.

Building a broad antiwar movement

Continued from Page 8

"We are not talking about a question of anti-imperialist consciousness, or rising revolutionary class consciousness in the United States," she said. "We are talking about greater interest, more willingness to take action."

She pointed to several examples: "It was registered in the April 20 demonstrations. It was shown by the interest in traveling to Nicaragua, and by support for the campaign organized around the call of the Sandinista Workers Federation in Nicaragua for solidarity."

We know these opportunities exist not from polls but from our own experiences, she added. We know it from our coworkers.

Proletarian military policy

"The context of the U.S.-spearheaded war in Central America and the domestic counterpart of the escalating war pressures here at home," she said, "is why deepening our practical work within the working class and on the war question must be at the center of everything we do."

"And that is the starting point for our proletarian military strategy as well."

"This is not a set of military tactics. We don't begin with the military, but rather with developing a strategy to mobilize the working class, both in and out of uniform, to lead the struggle of the broadest layers of working people against military policies of the capitalist rulers. It is the political line of march of the proletariat to arm and lead the exploited producers to take power to establish a workers' and farmers' government and to end for all time the war-making capacity of the capitalist class in this country."

It is useful, Waters said, to look at the last half decade to see what the U.S. ruling class has and hasn't accomplished in its militarization drive.

Fight over draft registration

The rulers' current militarization drive opened with the Carter administration's proposal to restore draft registration, made in a January 1980 State of the Union address. (The draft had been abolished in 1973 and draft registration ended in 1976 after Washington's defeat in Vietnam.)

The pretext for the proposal was the Soviet Union's use of troops in Afghanistan, and it took place in the context of the Iranian "hostage" crisis and the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua. This was nearly two years before Washington's contra war against Nicaragua really got under way.

Carter's January 1980 speech was the first real war speech of his administration, Waters explained. It also sparked a tactical debate within the ruling class. This was reflected in a lower federal court ruling in July that year that said the registration law was unconstitutional because it excluded women.

What was involved in this shift in ruling-class policy, Waters said, "was a move by the ruling class to start to wage a fight to

convince working people to accept and support the draft as necessary to build a massive imperialist army for use in war."

The militarization drive, she explained, "came out of the necessity of the U.S. ruling class to try to counter the legacy of Vietnam, to try to get rid of the Vietnam syndrome as a political factor in limiting the use of power."

The aim of the militarization drive is to give the rulers the political ability to use their military might as they deem necessary against the world revolution.

The stepped-up harassment of workers at military-production plants is an integral part of this drive. It is not by accident, Waters said, that beginning in 1980 many socialist workers and other workers were increasingly victimized by the federal industrial cops. There are more than 15 million workers with active Pentagon Defense Investigative Service files.

The rulers' decision to reestablish draft registration fits into this broader war preparation drive.

"What has happened in those five and a half years since the first announcement of the rulers' intention to reestablish draft registration?" Waters asked.

"Carter's announcement triggered immediate protests. Action coalitions emerged in every major city and on every campus in the country," she said.

Two months later, in March, the Committee Against Registration and the Draft organized a march of 25,000 people in Washington, D.C.

Opposition to draft registration was raised at the anti-nuclear power demonstration in Washington, D.C., in April 1980. Two members of the AFL-CIO National Executive Council voted against a resolution endorsing Carter's proposal.

The party's response, Waters said, was to join the fight against draft registration. Hundreds of thousands of youth weren't signing up.

The uncertainty of what the ruling class would finally do led many youth to take a wait-and-see approach. We noted this reaction among many of our coworkers, Waters said.

But the situation in the country has significantly changed since the early protests. In 1981 the U.S. Supreme Court declared draft registration constitutional.

In March 1985 this court upheld the constitutionality of the government's selective prosecution of those who had publicly announced their refusal to register.

This decision ended the legal uncertainty about registration.

It also came after the rulers scored an important victory in 1980 and '81, Waters said. They had succeeded in deflecting much of the debate away from draft registration itself onto the "right" of women to be drafted. This confused and disoriented both the movement against registration and women's organizations such as the National Organization for Women, which has fought for this legal "right."

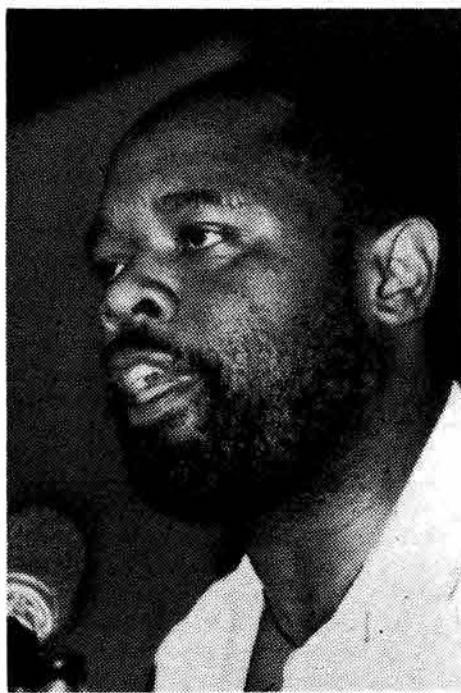
"This shift in the axis of the discussion,"

Waters said, "was one of the decisive factors that sealed the doom of the Equal Rights Amendment."

And by 1985 it was clear that restoring registration did not mean rapid reimposition of the draft. That is a battle still to come.

The rulers, Waters said, have been quite deliberate in the way they've enforced the draft registration law. The only convictions have been of individuals who repeatedly refused to register because of individual moral opposition.

"The end result, after a period of five and a half years," she said, "was that the rulers simply decided that any move toward massive prosecution would only be



Thabo Ntweng, SWP coordinator of antiwar and anti-apartheid activity.

counterproductive. Just keeping the pressure on, slowly undercutting the resistance, isolating a small and vocal fringe of intransigent moral resisters, had its effects." More and more youth are signing up.

At the same time, there has been a shift in consciousness among most opponents of draft registration. They see that the battle today is the fight against the U.S.-financed and U.S.-organized contra war against Nicaragua.

The decisive question for us, Waters said, is what our coworkers are thinking and doing about this. "As working-class fighters we're not interested in individual moral witness. We don't advocate breaking capitalist laws, and we don't break capitalist laws. The stakes are much higher than this or that law. We're after the class that makes those laws. It's not a question of mobilizing one but a question of mobilizing millions. Not to end up by choice in one of their jails but to take their jails away from them. That's what we're after," she said.

In 1980 the party had no policy on what its draft-age members should do, Waters said. But "the purpose of this report is to propose that we now adopt a party policy that members of our movement submit to registration. And we recommend to the Young Socialist Alliance that they do the same." (The YSA National Committee subsequently adopted such a policy.)

"Our policy is that we continue to ex-

press and organize the broadest possible forces in unequivocal opposition to capitalist conscription and all the agencies that are established to facilitate it and eventually implement it. That's our political stance," Waters said.

"We will continue to seek to orient the growing antiwar action movement in a clear class-struggle direction," she added, striving to involve increasing numbers of working people in and out of uniform in the exercise of their constitutionally guaranteed rights.

Workers and farmers in uniforms

Orienting the antiwar movement towards GIs is important, Waters explained. The army today is overwhelmingly composed of workers and farmers, with a higher percentage of Blacks and other oppressed nationalities than in the population as a whole.

Most of these soldiers are not "lifers" or members of the officer caste. They are young working people who have signed up for one or two stints, faced with the alternative of unemployment.

The current "volunteer" army is, if anything, more working class in composition than the draftee army of 15 years ago.

While April 20 was a real turning point in developing an action-oriented movement against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, Waters said, it had a major weakness: there was not one single active-duty GI who was singled out as part of the action.

"I'm sure," she said, "there were some there, but it was not a conscious political focus of the action."

"But for us this is an integral part of a proletarian orientation for an action movement against the war."

During the Vietnam war, the SWP explained this view in the antiwar movement, she said. It is these workers and farmers in uniform who will do the fighting and dying for imperialism.

"We have no illusions," Waters added, "on the character of the U.S. imperialist army. It's a police force of millions. It's organized to spread murder and terror from one end of the globe to the other. And it can't be improved or made more humane by adding a few women."

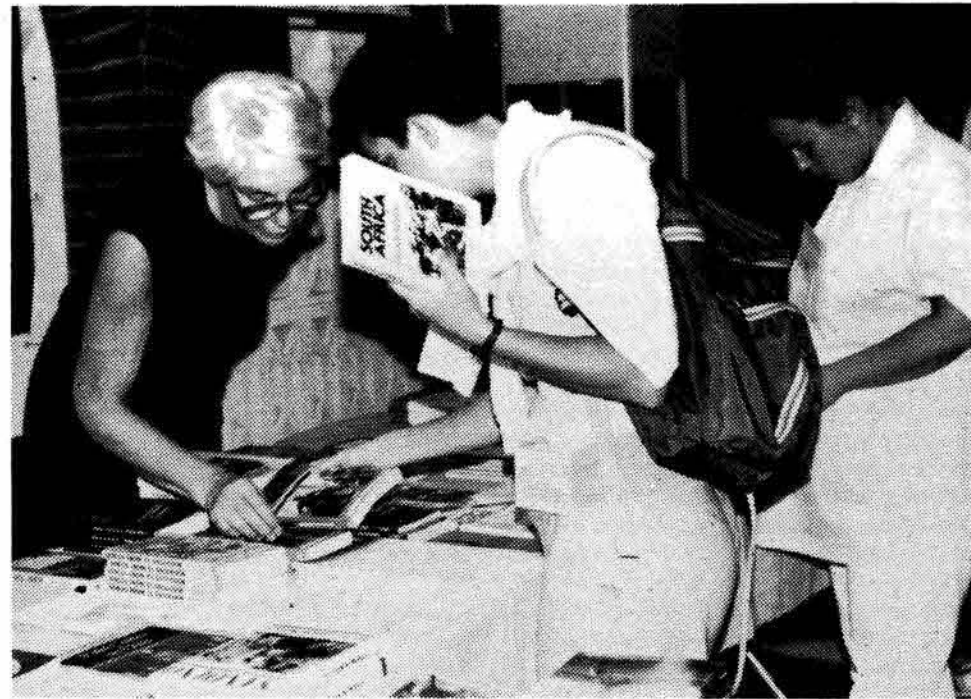
"It's only the victorious workers and farmers taking that military machine apart that will guarantee the future survival of humanity," she said.

Learning from errors

The April 20 protests, Waters concluded, provided "a new opportunity that we were able to throw ourselves into." Party members actively sought support from fellow unionists, farmers, students, and others and began turning outward, she said. "We made some errors, but we learned from them and are stronger for it. The errors helped us to clarify what we're doing, and to chart our course more accurately."

During the discussion of Waters' report a number of convention delegates pointed out that by saying that the U.S. government would invade Nicaragua no matter what had made it more difficult to convince people to act now against Washington. They couldn't see how their actions would be a factor in the confrontation in Central America.

In her summary of the discussion, Waters emphasized that the U.S. rulers are not just making idle threats against Nicaragua. The ruling class's line of march, she said, is to militarily overthrow the Nicaraguan



Sales of socialist literature were brisk during the six days of the conference. More than \$20,000 worth was sold. Best-selling books were the new volume of Fidel Castro's speeches and the latest edition of James P. Cannon's writings.

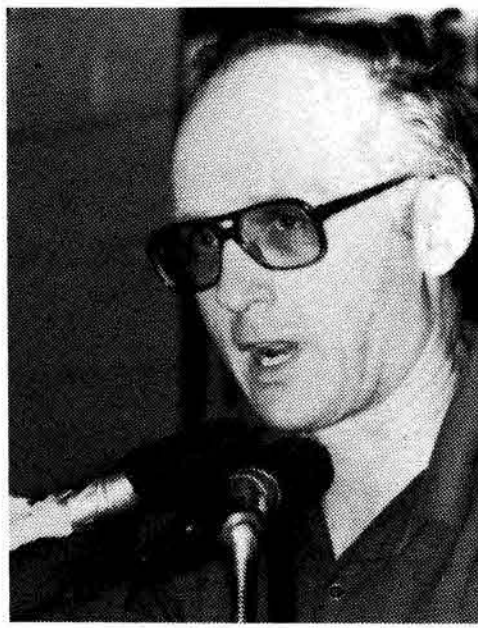
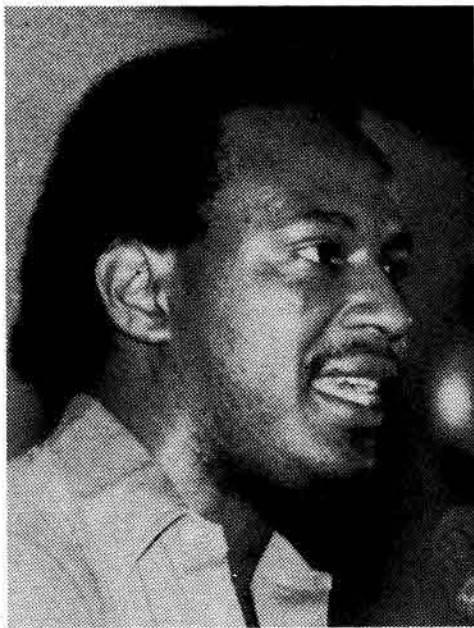
Nicaragua Network sends greetings

Debra Reuben, national coordinator of the Nicaragua Network, sent greetings to the 33rd Constitutional Convention of the Socialist Workers Party. The Nicaragua Network, based in the United States, organizes solidarity with the Nicaraguan people. Her greetings are reprinted below.

The Nicaragua Network sends its greetings to the participants of the Socialist

Workers Party's 33rd Annual Constitutional Convention and Education Conference. We applaud your continuing commitment to struggle for a just society at home and a real future for those who are oppressed in this world.

In particular, we support your outspoken solidarity with the people of Nicaragua, their revolution, and their freely chosen government.



National Organization Secretary Mac Warren (left) presented National Committee report on road to Black liberation; John Gaige (center), national farm director of the SWP, gave report on struggles of working farmers; and Joel Britton reported on party's faction-building perspectives in nine key industrial unions that SWP members are active in.

revolution. But it isn't inevitable.

Yet it would be a big mistake, she said, to believe that the U.S. rulers accept the status quo; that they simply seek to wear down the Sandinistas. They want to get rid of them.

What the future holds will be decided in struggle. That's why our actions, she said, are so important.

The fall protests against the war in Central America and apartheid, and plans for a 1986 spring action, can make a difference in the confrontation between Washington and the national liberation forces in Central America.

Waters explained that the party's errors tended to be in a sectarian direction. Our objective, she said, is to get into the antiwar movement as it exists and to help orient it to the social forces — labor, Blacks, Latinos, working farmers, youth, women, and GIs — who can end the war drive.

These ideas were also discussed at a workshop on fall antiwar perspectives. It was chaired by the party's coordinator of antiwar and anti-apartheid activity, Thabo Ntweng.

These fall activities include, he said, the September 21-25 Pledge of Resistance actions, October 11 National Anti-apartheid Protest Day, October 19-25 Peace With Justice Week, and November 23-25 Grass-roots Action Days.

The road to Black self-determination and liberation

Mac Warren, the party's National Organization Secretary, reported for the National Committee on the struggle for Black liberation today.

He initiated a discussion on the social changes within the oppressed Black nationality — particularly the greater integration of Blacks into the trade unions — following the overthrow of the Jim Crow system of legal segregation in the 1960s. That conquest of the civil rights movement was the greatest political victory for the U.S. working class in this century, Warren said.

Warren discussed the interrelationship of the battle for Black self-determination and the struggle of workers and exploited farmers for political power. He specifically took up the vanguard role of Black workers in the fight for Black liberation and in the struggle of workers and farmers to establish their own government.

It was in this context that Warren looked at the significance of the defeat of Jim Crow segregation in the South and the impact this had on social and class relations in U.S. society.

The oppression of Blacks and their increasing proletarianization, combined with the role Blacks played in defeating Jim Crow, Warren said, account for the political vanguard role of Blacks in working-class struggles today.

Recognizing these changes, he said, is essential in understanding the current stage of the battle for Black equality and freedom.

"The civil rights conquests transformed

the relationship of forces in the United States between the rulers and the exploited and oppressed and changed the consciousness of tens of millions," Warren said. "These victories of the Black nationality give it the confidence to fight against the rulers' offensive today. Just as Blacks led the fight that resulted in these gains, they are leading the fight to defend them."

This is seen on the job and in many other ways. Blacks are generally more combative, Warren noted.

It is seen in a distorted way in capitalist electoral politics. He pointed to the election campaigns of Harold Washington for mayor of Chicago, Wilson Goode for mayor of Philadelphia, and Jesse Jackson's bid for the Democratic Party presidential nomination.

While these capitalist campaigns were politically unsupportable, Warren said, they reflected the increased confidence in the Black community that Blacks should be able to contest any and all offices on a local, state, and national level. This includes the office of president.

"Then there are the politically supportable reflections of these changes," Warren said. "The Free South Africa Movement. The fights against racist cop terror. The fight against U.S. aggression in Central America and the Caribbean."

He also listed the leadership role of Blacks in union battles against concessions and in the ongoing campaign by a politically advanced layer to build a Black independent political party.

"It's the totality of these things that gives what we call the political vanguard role of the Black nationality in the class struggle its real meaning.

"It's Blacks who are politically out in front of the vast majority of the working class, politically more aggressive, politically more progressive, politically more self-confident, politically more active, politically more interested and involved in politics," he said.

But "this political vanguard role has a limitation. The political vanguard role does not and cannot immediately translate into fully developed class consciousness. You can't jump over that reality. You can't jump over the objective experiences of the Black population in the class struggle."

Warren said we can sometimes hope that Black nationalist consciousness will lead automatically to class consciousness; that Blacks can jump ahead of the working class as a whole on issues such as the role of capitalist politicians.

But, Warren said, Blacks can't do that any more than other workers can jump over their own limited experiences. It is through experiences in political battle that Blacks and other working people begin drawing conclusions that capitalist politicians and their parties are obstacles to emancipation.

"The workers who are nationalists, who relate to and lead the struggle for Black liberation today, cannot see, cannot separate out — outside of more political experience — the difference between *them*, the capitalist politicians, and *us*, the working people."

In referring to Harold Washington, Wilson Goode, and Jesse Jackson, Warren said no one should be disappointed when these capitalist politicians who are Black act like their white counterparts. These Black poli-

ticians support capitalism like the others. That's why it's incorrect to accuse them of betrayal. They can't betray what they never supported, he said.

Warren noted that in the aftermath of the cop bombing of the MOVE home in Philadelphia last spring, the party made an error by focusing too much fire on Goode, the Black mayor, and not the capitalist system, which is responsible for such terrorist attacks on working people.

Real opportunities

"Once we stop expecting the Black struggle to carry the entire working class on its back," Warren said, we can relax and take advantage of the real openings to advance the battle for Black equality.

What is the current stage of that fight?

"The reality," he began, "is that we have not seen a sustained national organization and mobilization of Blacks in more than 15 years.

"It's not that there hasn't been important political activity. There has. For example, the Black political conventions in the 1970s, the African liberation support committees, the battle for busing and school desegregation in Boston, protests against cop terror in Miami, Buffalo, and other cities, and the Martin Luther King holiday movement leading up to the August 27, 1983, march on Washington.

"But none of these," Warren said, "were a sustained political campaign organized and led in a systematic way."

The most significant battles — Boston in the mid-1970s and the King holiday fight — lasted for short periods and ended in victories.

But the party's participation in these struggles, Warren pointed out, tended to be distorted by high expectations. Party members hoped that they were the beginning of a new civil rights movement. "We were looking backwards. We hoped they would be the 'it' that would reignite the Black liberation movement." But "none of them could be a new civil rights movement."

Why? Because the civil rights movement had a beginning and an end, Warren said. It started with the 1955 bus boycott battle in Montgomery, Alabama, and culminated in the struggles in Selma, Bir-

mingham, and other cities in the mid-1960s. Its goal was the overthrow of Jim Crow segregation. By the late '60s, Jim Crow was dead and buried. The movement won.

"In our political resolution," Warren said, "we go over the significance of the civil rights movement. We call it a new rise in the proletarian struggle in the United States. It took the form of an upsurge in the Black liberation movement. And we oriented toward it."

This rise in the working-class movement was the beginning of the end of the previous political retreat of the working class, Warren said. It began to end the 10-year retreat coming out of World War II and the launching of the "cold war" and anticommunist witch-hunt.

This Black upsurge opened the door to the student protests, the movement against the Vietnam War, and later movements of other oppressed national minorities and women.

But, Warren said, "the next upsurge in the struggle for Black liberation won't be some warmed-over version of the civil rights movement. It can't be."

The fight today is against the capitalist system itself. What can be learned from the civil rights battle are the methods of struggle that were used to win. We can learn from that. The mass demonstrations, the pickets, the reaching out to allies — North, South, West, and internationally.

Shifts in class structure among Blacks

Since the overthrow of Jim Crow, there have been some important shifts in the class structure of the Black nationality, Warren added. The most important changes involve the deeper integration of Blacks into the trade unions.

"One of the best things that Black workers did to take advantage of the civil rights movement was to fight for the democratization of the unions," Warren said.

As in society as a whole, Jim Crow was prevalent in the organized labor movement. Most unions for decades had dual locals — one for Blacks, one for whites. The AFL-CIO officialdom gave lip service to the fight against racism and Jim Crow. But it never actively fought it. The federation refused to back the Montgomery bus boycott even though the battle was led by E.D. Nixon, a leader of both the local Sleeping Car Porters union, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, and the local branch of the NAACP.

Black auto workers in Detroit played a key role in the civil rights actions in that city. Yet they could never get equal representation in that union's top leadership body.

It took until the late 1970s before the United Steelworkers elected its first Black as an international officer. And that came after a reform slate challenged the entrenched bureaucracy.

It wasn't until the civil rights victory that real changes began to take hold in the unions.

Since the late 1960s Black workers have made giant steps forward. There are now

Continued on next page



Seven British coal miners attended convention. They distributed hundreds of pieces of literature and sold buttons, newspapers, and other materials to convention participants.

Socialist rally hits U.S. ties to racist South Africa regime

BY JIM JACKSON

OBERLIN, Ohio — A spirited rally wrapped up the Socialist Workers Party's convention on Thursday evening, August 15. It focused on solidarity with fighters around the world.

Militant editor Malik Miah chaired the event. He opened the rally by urging participants to redouble their efforts to oppose U.S. support to the racist South African regime.

Thabo Ntweng, who coordinates the SWP's participation in the fight against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean and in the anti-apartheid movement, stressed the need to join the protest movement as it exists in order to build the broadest protests against apartheid. "The battle in South Africa is a direct aid to the embattled freedom fighters in El Salvador and to the Nicaraguan revolution," he said.

A highlight of the rally was a speech by Susanna Ounei, a leader of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front in French-ruled New Caledonia. Ounei described the history of the freedom struggle in New Caledonia. The French rulers of her country had refused to grant the Kanak people independence. They will continue fighting until independence is won, Ounei stressed.

Ounei is currently on a nationwide speaking tour of the United States.

Mick Richmond, one of seven British miners who attended the SWP convention, spoke on the 1984-85 yearlong strike of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) for jobs and against mine closures. Richmond was one of 30 miners from Leicestershire, England, who became known as the "Dirty 30." They are called that, Miah explained, because they were the only miners in their area who refused to scab on the strike.

During the convention, Richmond and the other miners distributed NUM literature and sold buttons to help raise funds for victimized miners.

SWP National Committee member Mary-Alice Waters spoke on the importance of the Cuban leadership's campaign against the foreign debt of Third World countries. Waters recently returned from Cuba where she attended a broad meeting that was called to discuss the foreign debt of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Waters said working people in the United States should support the call for a nationwide Day of Action Against the Foreign Debt set for October 23. "The call to cancel or indefinitely postpone payment on foreign debts and interest," she said, is a moral and just call.

Speaking on behalf of the Young Socialist Alliance, Ellen Haywood, the YSA's National Secretary, explained that the socialist youth organization is throwing all its resources into building the anti-apartheid movement among young workers, farmers, and students. "The fight against apartheid and Washington's aggression in Central America are the YSA's central priorities," she said.

The SWP candidate for mayor of New York, Andrea González, also spoke.

Miah announced the opening of a campaign to raise \$125,000 for a Socialist Publication Fund. He reported that socialist workers in the nine industrial unions that the SWP is active in led the way in initial pledges. Fifty-four members of the United Auto Workers, for example, pledged a total of more than \$14,000 to the fund.

Almost \$70,000 was pledged at the rally.



YSA National Secretary Ellen Haywood (left) and Andrea González, socialist candidate for mayor of New York.



Road to Black self-determination

Continued from previous page

Black officials in most major unions — from the local level right up to the international offices. There is still racism but the weight of Blacks in the unions is greater even than their impact on society as a whole.

"The unions today," Warren said, "are the most integrated institutions in U.S. society. There is less discrimination in these institutions than any other. There is more Black representation. There is more affirmative action than in society as a whole. There is a higher percentage of Blacks in the unions than any other sector."

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) is an important reflection of the changes in the unions. Formed in the early 1970s by Black officials, the CBTU symbolizes the potential unity of the Black and labor movements. Dual membership in Black rights groups, such as the NAACP, and the unions is common.

"This connection between the unions and the Black movement," Warren said, "will more and more play a role in the debates, discussions, and combativity that unfold in future battles of the labor movement. The connection strengthens both movements."

Black middle class

There have been some other changes in the class structure of the Black nationality that should be taken note of, Warren explained.

There are now hundreds of thousands of Blacks who are "making it" as part of the capitalist system, he said. "Seven percent of the Black population are doing better today than Blacks have ever done in the history of this country. They have directly benefited from the accomplishments of the Black movement."

Under Jim Crow this layer was mainly the funeral home directors, shopkeepers, and academics at the Black colleges. They still exist, Warren noted, but the bulk of the 7 percent are professionals, lawyers, as well as corporate executives, managers, accountants, and other businessmen in the big capitalist firms from which Blacks were historically excluded.

This layer of better-off Blacks is "being bourgeoisified," Warren said. "And they love it. The civil rights victory opened the political door and allowed this layer to slip

right out of the working class."

Moreover, Warren said, they are not the Jim Crow "Uncle Toms" who were despised by the Black community, the ones who kissed up to the "bossman." No, he said, instead these are individuals like those on the Bill Cosby television show. The Blacks who have "made it" — the ones who are considered successes.

In the battle to smash Jim Crow many in the Black middle class played a leading role. For good reason: they were politically oppressed like all Blacks. They had to sit in the back of the bus too. There were only a handful of capitalist politicians, elected or even appointed to office, who were Black. The door was shut on them as it was for Black working people.

But today this layer — much expanded — is "in the system." They oppose racial discrimination but aren't for a sustained fight for full Black equality. They shy away from mobilizing Blacks in actions to press for the rights of the Black nationality.

But racism and national oppression, Warren said, are alive and well. Black workers and farmers have few resources and opportunities, and those they have are under attack. The official government statistics on poverty and unemployment prove that racist national oppression is institutionalized.

"The fact that there are class differences in the Black nationality is what is actually at work," Warren said. "It makes things clearer to all Blacks that there is an *us* and *them* inside the Black nationality itself."

NBIPP

Warren noted that all major Black groups remained locked within capitalist electoralism. Even a formation like the National Black United Front is focusing more and more of its activity on participation in capitalist elections.

Only the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) favors a program for independent political action. But it too has been in crisis. Most of NBIPP's main leaders at the time of its formation in 1980, Warren said, have left the organization. Some have become prominent spokespeople for Jesse Jackson's pro-Democratic Party orientation. Others have just dropped out of active politics.

Even the layer that supports NBIPP's program is still unsure of where to go politically. It is difficult, Warren said, for a vanguard formation like NBIPP to stand up to the pressures exerted on it by the employers' offensive. NBIPP can't jump over the real experiences of Blacks in the class struggle any more than other workers can.

But, Warren said, this is why participating in and building NBIPP is so important. NBIPP is a product of more than 20 years of political discussions within the Black nationality on independent political action.

Revolutionary perspectives

What road for Black liberation?

"Our eyes," Warren said, "are on the working-class fighters in the oppressed Black nationality."

"There is one nationality, but two different class outlooks. The political perspectives are different, and the roads toward Black liberation are different," he said.

The better-off Black layer is for deeper integration into capitalism. They want to reform the Democratic Party and the capitalist state — an impossible goal.

Black workers and farmers want self-determination. Their "line of march for full equality is toward the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government in the United States," Warren said. "Only by workers and farmers conquering government power will the Black nationality win its self-determination."

Understanding this perspective as the road to Black liberation, he said, makes us appreciate more fully the significance of the civil rights movement and what it accomplished.

During the discussion of Warren's report a number of delegates pointed to the contributions of the revolutionary internationalist leader Malcolm X, who was assassinated in 1965. In his last year, Malcolm began explaining the limits of Black nationalism. His views were based on his own experiences and on the history of the Black liberation struggle.

Malcolm, one delegate pointed out, began to explain why the fight for Black emancipation had to be seen as part of the international struggle against capitalism and imperialism. At the same time, the delegate said, Malcolm understood the power of the civil rights fight and its meaning in the overall battle against national oppression.

Another speaker noted that the rise of a larger Black middle class helps to emphasize the political and class questions involved in the fight for Black rights.

Situation facing working farmers today

Working farmers are becoming radicalized as they fight to save their farms and livelihood, said John Gaige, in his report from the National Committee on the struggles of working farmers. Gaige is the SWP's national farm director who coordinates the party's work among exploited farmers and the party's participation in the farm-protest movement.

"Exploited family farmers in this country have gone through an experience in recent years of seeing an acceleration of farm foreclosures," he said. "Every single farmer either knows other farmers who have been driven off their land, or has had his or her own farm threatened. Many have tried to defend their farms from the banks, food monopolies, and insurance companies. Many have acquired a deep distrust and hatred for the U.S. government and its farm policies."

"This experience has drawn many working farmers into thinking seriously about what's wrong with this system. It has triggered a desire to get at the root of the problem. It is out of this experience that a number of working farmers have begun to politicize. Some are becoming eager to



Militant editor Malik Miah (left) and British miner Mark Richmond at socialist rally. Richmond reads winning raffle tickets for Cuban T-shirts against foreign debt.

Continued from previous page
learn how farmers are doing in revolutionary Nicaragua."

Gaige described two recent tours to Nicaragua organized by working farmers. These farmers came back, he said, impressed with the gains of the revolution. They see the Nicaraguan government working for the interests of the exploited farmers, not against them. "This interest in Central America and the Caribbean represents a big opportunity for antiwar activists and international-minded unionists. It is an opportunity to talk with U.S. working farmers about the example of Nicaragua's progress; the interrelationship of the U.S. government's bankrolled contra war and the rulers' antilabor and antifarmer offensive at home."

Gaige stressed the value of the party participating in and building farmer and farmworker tours to Nicaragua.

Farm protests against foreclosures

Gaige also reported on the struggles of working farmers against foreclosures. The party has gone through many experiences — particularly in the Midwest — in fighting side by side with working farmers. All SWP branches can and should pay close attention to developments among farmers. This includes learning more about the situation of Black farmers, he noted.

The battles in the countryside are "primarily defensive battles," Gaige pointed out. The aim is to stop the forcible expropriation of farms by the banks.

Farmers are learning through these battles. Many are receptive to Fidel Castro's proposal to cancel the Third World debt, since U.S. farmers are in a similar position. Their farm debt is also unpayable and should be cancelled, Gaige said.

He noted that some unions, particularly the United Auto Workers, are seeking closer ties with working farmers. "The labor officialdom's aim in joining farm protests," Gaige said, "is the same as everything else they do in the class struggle. They seek an alliance with farmers on a liberal, procapitalist basis."

"We, however, seek to forge a fighting anticapitalist alliance. We think this is indispensable for the revolutionary struggle for power in this country," he emphasized. "And, it is a perspective we can discuss with working farmers."

This was the first report on U.S. farmers to be adopted by an SWP national convention.

Revolutionary union politicians

The National Committee's report on the party's functioning in the trade unions was given by Joel Britton. It focused on the progress the party is making in the rebuild-



Concert in celebration of sixth anniversary of Sandinista revolution featured Roy Brown (left), Puerto Rican singer and pioneer performer of "New Latin American Song Movement," and Brazilian jazz musician Thiago de Mello (far right) and Amazon group.



ing and strengthening of its political work in industry and in nine key industrial unions.

Britton pointed to the party's deepening understanding of the interrelationship between expanding the party's political influence in the union movement and the role of the party's union fractions (sub-units of the party).

Having each branch build more union fractions based in the nine unions that SWP members are active in, he explained, helps spread the party's political influence in the labor movement. It enables party members to function more effectively as revolutionary trade union politicians.

The nine unions are: United Auto Workers; United Steelworkers; International Association of Machinists; International Union of Electronic Workers; Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; United Transportation Union; United Mine Workers of America; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union.

During the convention socialists active in all nine unions met.

"Branches with fractions in more than one union," Britton said, "are stronger politically, with more of a feel for what's going on and what the problems and possibilities are among more different layers of the working class and union movement. You have better election campaigns for public office organized by the branch. They are more directed to the working class public on our broad political program, not narrow issues," he said.

He then explained that more effective political work in the unions can be done today with a few socialists in a plant, mine, or mill than with a dozen or so. This can be true with a single socialist if she or he is part of a national fraction.

What political possibilities there are in the unions today is tied to the level of class struggle, he said, not the number of socialists in one plant or union.

Britton reported that socialist auto workers also had evaluated their experiences in the skilled trades section of that work force. They concluded that this was not the section of the union that socialists want to be situated in.

The production workers — where most of the Black, other oppressed minorities, women, and youth are — will lead the battles to transform the United Auto Workers and other unions into revolutionary instruments of class struggle. Socialists must concentrate their union-building and party-building activity among these workers.

Election of National Committee

The two political resolutions and four reports based on those documents were unanimously adopted by the delegates.

The convention elected a new national leadership. The National Committee of 50 members has 17 women, 12 Blacks, and 7 Latinos. Four members of the party's Control Commission were also elected.

According to the credentials report, of the 70 delegates elected by the branches, 33 were women, 6 Black, and 2 Chicano. Forty-eight delegates were members of the nine industrial unions in which the SWP is active.

Built around the convention was an Edu-

cational and Activists Conference. More than 90 classes were given by SWP and YSA members and international guests.

These included classes by recent participants in the party's leadership school. They conducted classes on "The International Working Men's Association 1864-76"; "Bonapartism: Lessons of the Second Empire of Louis Bonaparte"; and "U.S. Civil War: Revolution, Reconstruction, Reaction."

National Committee member Steve Clark gave a three-part series on "Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution and the Fight Against the Second Wave of Menshevism."

Two classes were given on the new Pathfinder book, *The Communist League of America, 1932-34*. In addition, classes were presented on the U.S. labor movement, Chicano liberation, Malcolm X, the fight for independent Black political action, and lessons from the movement against the Vietnam War.

Classes on the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions and on Africa were also held.

There were introductory classes for participants. And many of the classes were given in Spanish as well. The convention sessions were simultaneously translated into Spanish and French.

There was a special panel by the British miners. Two hundred people attended. The miners discussed the lessons of their historic strike. A leader of the British section of the Fourth International gave a class on the British political situation. And another leader spoke on the fight for women's liberation in Britain.

There was also a series of workshops on organizing party-building activities. This included a workshop on party tasks in the fight for women's liberation, which was chaired by the party's women's liberation activity coordinator, Pat Grogan.

The workshop discussed the importance of party participation in the pro-abortion rights activities called for this fall. The National Organization for Women (NOW) is organizing abortion-rights rallies at the Supreme Court and federal courthouses across the country on October 6. NOW is also organizing a national march on Washington, D.C., for next spring.

The workshop discussed the need to draw NOW and other women's rights groups into antiwar and anti-apartheid activities.

There were workshops on the party's tasks in the fight against war and racism, and workshops on the defense of democratic rights.

The workshop on selling and distributing the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, the Spanish-language biweekly, and the fall press circulation drive, discussed the importance of the socialist press in turning the party outward.

There was a separate workshop on selling the socialist press at plant gates. It is a norm of party membership to participate in weekly sales outside worksites as a way to help bring socialist ideas to a broad section of the working class.

There were workshops on party education, organizing socialist bookstores, and party finances. The latter included a discussion on the fall Socialist Publication Fund. The fund will help finance the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and the biweekly *Intercontinental Press*. It will also help support the production and distribution of *New Internationalist* and help pay for the many books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder Press.

The goal of the Socialist Publication Fund is to raise \$125,000 by November 15.

In addition to the opening-night educational talk by Jack Barnes, there were two special presentations.

Michel Prairie — a central leader of the Revolutionary Workers League, the Canadian section of the Fourth International — explained the significance of publishing the French-language magazine, *Nouvelle Internationale*. Prairie, a coeditor of *Nouvelle Internationale*, said this new publication will aid the building of the Canadian section in Quebec, the oppressed French-speaking nation in Canada.

Plans to expand the publication and circulation of Pathfinder Press books and pamphlets were summarized in a special report to the convention by SWP National Committee member Larry Seigle.

During the six-day convention and educational conference more than \$20,000 worth of socialist literature was sold.

Of the 900 participants at the convention and educational conference, 200 were members of the Young Socialist Alliance. For 66 participants, it was their first convention. A big majority of the participants belonged to industrial unions. Three participants were farmers.

Several people decided to join the YSA during the convention.

End all U.S. ties to Apartheid! Young Socialist

Stand up for Free South Africa



Current issue of the *Young Socialist* contains articles on the freedom struggle in South Africa and the growing anti-apartheid movement in this country and internationally.

It reports on the Young Socialist Alliance's decision to throw all its resources into the fight to end all U.S. ties to apartheid.

This issue also reintroduces the *Young Socialist* as a monthly publication to report on the growing participation of youth in social struggles.

Start your one-year subscription with this issue — \$3.

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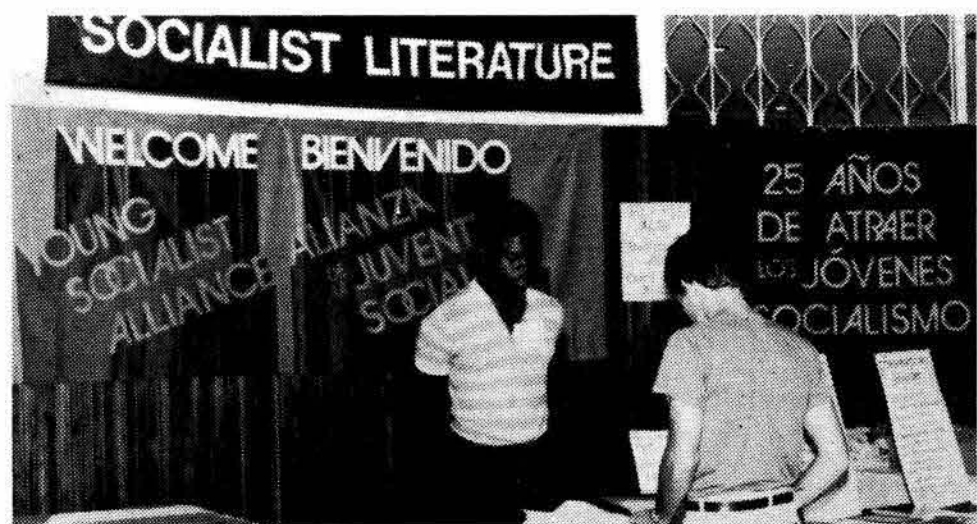
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Many convention-goers were attracted to YSA literature table and several joined youth organization.

Atlanta cops beat Black man to death

BY PAT NOLAN

ATLANTA — A number of public protest meetings have taken place in response to the August 14 killing of Eddie Kirkland at the hands of the Atlanta cops. Kirkland, a church deacon, is the fourth Black man in this city to die from cop violence in three months.

Cops arrested Kirkland at his apartment after two gunshots were fired in the area. Witnesses report Kirkland came out of his home with his hands up, saying he had done nothing and asking what he was being arrested for. The cops then started shoving Kirkland around.

When Kirkland's feet and hands were handcuffed, witness Frances Lowe reported that the cops repeatedly beat Kirkland inside the cop car. They also closed the door on his head several times. "He kept calling out, 'They are going to kill me!'" said Amealia Tate, another witness.

Jo Ann Partridge said that the cops then drove behind a gas station, closed off the area, and didn't come out for nearly an hour. Kirkland was then taken to Grady Memorial Hospital, severely bruised and bleeding, where he lay unattended for several hours. He died later that day.

A meeting to protest the killing the following day attracted 500 people. Residents of Perry Homes Public Housing, where Kirkland had lived, pointed out that he was "picked out at random and murdered, but he hadn't done anything."

"I think the cops who did this should be put in jail and tried for murder," said one young man.

Rev. Hosea Williams, who organized that protest and another one of 300, condemned Kirkland's murder and "the wave of racist murders in the city." He called on the city government and Mayor Andrew Young to put an end to the cop killings.

In a closed meeting on August 19, Young met with a leader of the Perry Homes tenant association and Kirkland's brother. A large crowd remained outside discussing the murder and the need for an open meeting with the mayor.

After the closed meeting, Young met with residents for about 30 minutes. When he announced that the cops had been "suspended" to another part of town, he was booed. Most people thought the cops

should either be suspended for real or jailed immediately.

Rev. Sherman Manning said, "If a man commits a crime, he needs to be arrested, taken to jail, and tried by a jury." The cops "killed that man. You know they beat him to death," Manning said.

The initial medical examiner's report said that there was no trace of drugs in Kirkland's blood. But local newspapers started reporting that Kirkland's blood had traces of cocaine. The coroner's report issued over a week after Kirkland's death claimed that he died not from the beating, but that he swallowed a bag of cocaine which exploded in his stomach. The coroner admitted that no container or plastic was found in his stomach.

A subsequent protest meeting rejected the coroner's findings. "Medical examiners have been known to cover up for the police," Hosea Williams responded. Pearl May Kirkland, Eddie's mother, said, "He wasn't sick." She said she never saw her son take drugs and he "never acted like he was on them."

Sara Jean Johnston, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Atlanta, condemned the cop murder and called for the "immediate arrest and prosecution of those responsible."



Seattle farm tour reveals crisis

BY JANET POST

SEATTLE — "It's a real struggle." That was how Alice Signey of Signey Farms described her work. She was speaking to some 40 participants in a Puget Sound farm tour who were visiting her farm.

The August 18 tour was sponsored by the Pike Place Public Market in Seattle. About 100 farmers sell their produce at this market.

Tour members visited four farms and the Woodinville Indochinese Farm Project.

All of the farmers visited are facing difficult problems, ranging from expensive city water to forced land sales. For city farmers, the taxes on three-fourths of an acre run \$1,800 a year.

Grocery companies try to take advantage of these farmers by pressuring them to sign

up as contract farmers. Contract farmers buy land with the company and have to provide a specific crop for the grocer.

Pascalina Verde of Verde Farms is one farmer who has resisted the contract. But he still faces pressure. Verde says he has kept his land so far by growing herbs and lettuce from seed his family brought from Italy, in addition to corn and cabbage. Still the farm has gone from 100 to six acres. It is one of the only farms left within the Seattle city limits.

Verde still has to sell his crop to a grocery company, even though he is not under contract. "The company calls me at night and says they need 600 boxes by 4:30 a.m. That means we work all night," he said.

"I would have to make \$180 a day just to break even."

Alice Signey and her daughter Pat are third- and fourth-generation farmers but say they can only hold onto Signey Farms for another five years. When asked if being a woman farmer was difficult, Signey replied: "I taught my husband and children how to plow, seed, and harvest while also working a city job."

Unable to afford farm machinery beyond an old tractor, the Signeys use many handtools that are more than 50 years old. "Just one tire for our tractor costs \$250,"

explained Pat Signey. "How could we pay \$475,000 for a whole tractor?"

In addition to farming from sunup to sundown, the Signeys go to market every day and spend winters pruning the fruit trees and bushes.

"We're competing with the big farms that contract with the canneries. They just fill the fruit with water to make it look bigger. We won't do that," they said.

Farm tour participants learned some things about Asian farmers in this area.

Prior to World War II there were many Japanese farmers in Washington. They were put in concentration camps by the government during the war and were not allowed to regain their farmlands.

There are quite a few Filipino farmers but many have not been able to get any bank or government loans.

The Woodinville Indochinese Farm Project has to rent the land from the county, which retains the right to foreclose. The project began when eight Laotian families cleared the land by hand and built the wooden shacks that they still live in.

Neighboring farmers helped the Laotians adjust to the flat land and row planting since some of the farming in Laos is on hillsides.

Do you know someone who reads Spanish?

'PM' campaigns against apartheid

Apartheid is a political system that is based on the legal, institutionalized segregation and oppression of the laboring Black majority by South Africa's white minority, which comprises less than one-sixth of the population.

Blacks in South Africa can't vote, travel freely, or even decide where they want to live and work. Though they produce the wealth of the country, they are kept impoverished by brutal and systematic repression.

The struggle in South Africa is a struggle for national liberation. Because the apartheid state and the apartheid social system are so intertwined and entrenched, the overthrow of this violent social system can only be achieved by a fight of revolutionary proportions.

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5,000 IUE members strike GE

BY GEORGE KONTANIS

SCHENECTADY, N.Y. — Only five weeks after a new contract was signed, 5,100 members of International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE) Local 301 hit the bricks.

The strike, which began August 16, has shut down production at the General Electric plant here, said Louis Valenti, president of Local 301. The workers are protesting the company's use of outside contractors to install a computer cable network in the steam-turbine division. The union is angry that GE is farming out work that could be done by union members, 1,500 of whom are laid off and on a call-back list. The union called the action after two weeks of talks failed to budge GE.

"We feel that we could do it, and if it is a new technology then we feel that we should be trained in it, and we wanted the company to put a few union people on the job so in the future we could do the technology," Valenti said.

GE official Fred Haas claims the work is highly specialized and can't be done by union members. GE claims that all available union electricians were occupied elsewhere and that none were on layoff.

No talks have been scheduled between GE and the union, said Valenti.

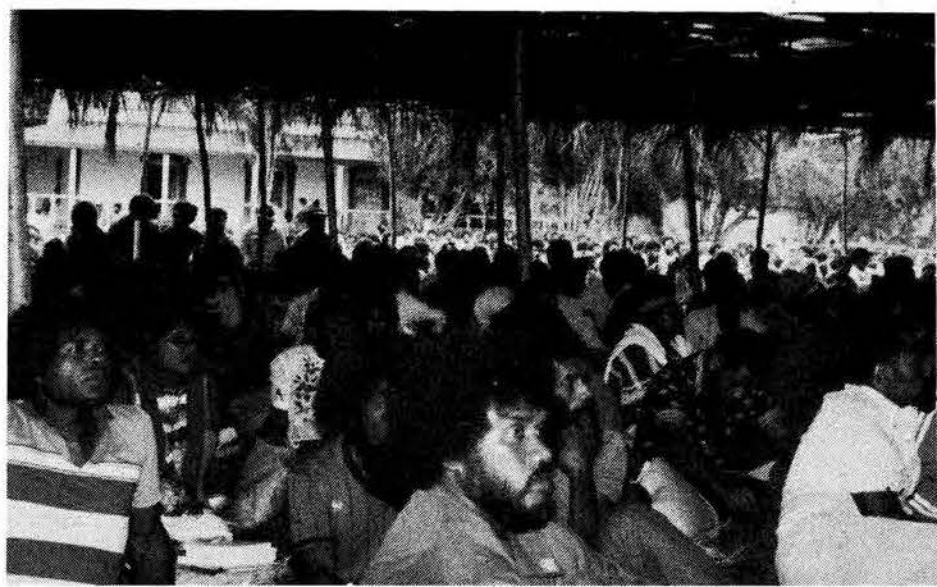
This is the second job action by the

union this summer. In June, 2,400 union members walked out at the steam-turbine generator engineering and manufacturing department. This was the largest walkout in three years. Workers were protesting unresolved grievances. That strike lasted three days.

The current strike, like the one in June, began without any picketing by union members. During a 1983 strike, GE attempted to ban pickets and to ban picketing during any future strikes. A court ruled against GE in both cases.

"We just felt that this time we are not going to have any pickets, even though we won the right to picket in 1983," said union president Valenti. "We feel that by closing down the plant they know how we feel. We are upset about what's going on so we felt it's not going to be picketing this time."

Some union members, however, are discussing whether job walkouts without picketing put any pressure on the GE management to change their hostile stance toward the union. Many unionists in the Capital District remember the inspiring example of the mass 1983 strike picketing that shut down GE and won the right to picket on the streets of Schenectady. It was a powerful example of how union power can be mobilized to roll back attacks by companies like GE.



Militant

1985 conference of Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS).

Susanna Ounei is a leader of the Kanak people of the South Pacific island nation of New Caledonia. The Kanak people are waging a determined struggle for independence from French colonial rule. Ounei is presently touring 20 U.S. cities to win support for that struggle.

The following excerpts are from a speech given by Ounei in December 1984. In that speech she traces the history of the Kanak people's resistance to French colonial rule. The speech is the main article in a pamphlet by Ounei, *For Kanak Independence: The fight against French rule in New Caledonia*.

As the introduction to the pamphlet explains, the first Kanak political party — the Union Calédonienne (UC) — was formed in the early 1950s when the Kanaks first won the right to vote. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, demands for full independence began to be raised.

In 1977, the UC — the largest of the Kanak parties — adopted independence as its goal.

In 1979, all the Kanak and pro-independence parties united in an electoral coalition called the Independent Front. In elections that year, the front won 83 percent of the Kanak vote and gained 14 of the 36 seats in the Territorial Assembly — New Caledonia's colonial parliament. It later became the governing party in the assembly.

In France, the 1981 national elections were won by an electoral coalition of the French Socialist and Communist parties and the government of François Mitterrand came to power. Prior to the election, these parties had pledged support for Kanak self-determination. Once in office, however, the Mitterrand government forcefully opposed the Kanak people's demand for independence.

In 1984, the French Parliament adopted a statute proposed by French Minister of Overseas Territories Georges Lemoine. The statute affirmed continued French colonial rule.

In response, the Independence Front walked out of the Territorial Assembly and in September 1984 called a special conference of the Kanak independence movement. This marked a turning point in the independence struggle.

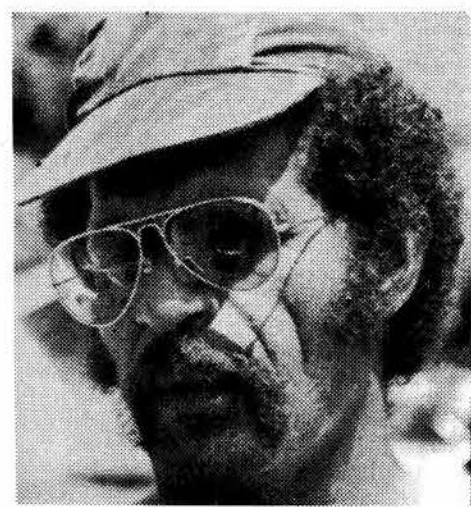
The conference established the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), uniting the pro-independence groups and other Kanak organizations, and adopted a charter, which is also printed in the pamphlet.

The conference called for a boycott of the November 1984 elections for the Territorial Assembly. Eighty percent of the Kanaks supported the boycott, which was

accompanied by mass mobilizations to occupy traditional lands and take control of Kanak towns.

On Dec. 1, 1984, the FLNKS established a provisional government of Kanaky, the new name chosen for an independent New Caledonia. Long-time independence leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou was named president.

The response of the French government was to send thousands of additional troops



Slain independence leader Eloi Machoro

to occupy New Caledonia.

A wave of violent repression was unleashed. Since the November boycott, more than 20 Kanaks have been killed, scores tortured, and over 100 political prisoners held in jail.

In addition to the French troops, the Kanak people also face thousands of heavily armed right-wing French settlers.

Among those killed was Eloi Machoro, a central leader of FLNKS, who was gunned down by occupation forces in January 1985. The pamphlet also includes a tribute to Machoro by Ounei and an excerpt from one of his last interviews.

This pamphlet is available from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. The price is \$1.00 per copy. Please include 50¢ for postage and handling.

* * *

While they were saying never kill and never steal because God will be unhappy, we were reduced from 200,000 to only 26,000 Kanak people by the massacres.

In 1878, a big chief called Atai, who did not want to follow what the French said, organized the people and we had the first insurrection in New Caledonia. For that, the people were again massacred.

In 1917, when they fought the Germans in the first world war, the French wanted to bring our people to France to protect their land against the Germans. Our chief Noel said, "Why are we going to France to defend the land of the French against the Germans, when they are stealing our land and killing our people?" And so he organized the people to refuse to go to France.

And what happened to him? They cut his head off and sent it to the museum in Paris. To the present day, the head of our chief is in Paris. The head of our chief is kept by the same people who conquered us and who said at that time that we were the savages!

'Our people were humiliated'

After that, right up until 1953, our people — our grandfathers and our grandmothers — were too scared. The repression was really strong. Up until 1946, the Kanak people did not even have the right to

Kanak leader on fight against French rule in New Caledonia

go into the towns — they first had to get permission from the gendarmes [police]. If they went into the town after 9 o'clock in the evening, the white French had the right to kill our people.

Our people — our mothers, our parents, and our grandparents — were humiliated every day. Every day you would hear the whites calling us "dirty Kanaks" — and "Kanak," for them, was a really pejorative [insulting] word.

We lived like that until 1953. Then our parents built the first political party, called the Union Calédonienne (UC). The UC at that time was simply for reforms; just to ameliorate our condition.

In 1969 a Kanak chief called Nidoish Naisseline came back from France, where he had been studying. Nidoish Naisseline had been involved in the 1968 workers' and students' upsurge in France. When he arrived back in New Caledonia the word "Kanak" was really pejorative, but he fought to make it valuable again.

We put the word "Kanak" in the forefront. It was our slogan: "Kanak." When the French saw we were really proud to say "Kanak," they began to call us "Melanesians." Before, it was "dirty Kanak"!

And we talked about the land; the need to demand the return of our land without conditions.

In 1974 we were conscious that the 24th of September [the anniversary of the French colonisation] is our tangi — our funeral. We said that our people must stop celebrating the 24th of September. On September 24, 1974, while the army celebrated, we went into the middle of the road with our banners to protest. There were only about 30 of us. The army and the colonisers surrounded us and beat us in the street, and there was a lot of blood spilt.

They arrested two of us. On the day after — September 25, 1974 — we went to the court where they were judging our comrades and asked for them to be freed.

They called in the army and the police — they surrounded the court and beat us. Twelve of us were arrested, and we were sent to prison for six months. But now our people began wondering why we were in jail. They began to wake up. Many of our comrades now went out to the countryside to explain to the people the importance of Kanak independence and the return of all our lands without conditions.

After this court fight, they gave us two months. At this time we began to talk about capitalism in the world; about imperialism.

We went around our countryside to talk about independence, true independence. We don't want neo-colonialism or imperialism. We want true independence.

Then the right wing began to organise. They said that if New Caledonia became independent, we would not be able to get rice and sugar. (Our people love rice; we get it from Australia.) They said we would be like people in Africa, who die because they are hungry.

New Caledonia has a rich economy. We are the second-largest producers of nickel in the world. As well, we produce manganese, chrome, gold, iron, cobalt, zinc and coffee. And of course we have tourists; in Club Med. We said to our people that we must have our freedom, because the French use our land and say they are staying in New Caledonia to protect us and stop us from being hungry. Our reply was that as long as they stay in our country and we don't get our independence, we will always be hungry. So the French must give us back our country.

We continued to fight. [In 1984 French Minister of Overseas Territories Georges]

Lemoine came to New Caledonia and threatened the Kanak people. He said that he would ensure the security of New Caledonia, and that all the people in New Caledonia could participate in determining its future.

Kanaks a minority

We disagreed with what he said because the total population of New Caledonia is 140,000. But the Kanak people are only 60,000 in their own country.

If we are a minority now, it is because the Mayor of Noumea, Roger Laroque, announced in 1972 that he wanted to "make New Caledonia white." This was after our freedom struggle had begun growing. Noumea is the capital, and a white town. Kanaks cannot live there because they have no work. Out of 60,000 Kanaks, only 7,000 work, so the Kanak people live in their tribes.

So they brought a lot of immigrants from overseas. The new immigrants (that is, since 1972) we got were all the traitors [that is, the supporters of French imperialism] from Algeria, all the traitors from Vanuatu, all the traitors from Vietnam. We get that sort of refugee! We haven't any refugees from oppression in South America or South Africa, for example — the true refugees. No, we get the traitors of the world — the rubbish of the world. They are all in our country!

Now the Mitterrand government has said that we will get independence through a referendum, and that all the people living in New Caledonia will be able to vote. We refused that. We said that only people who have one parent born in New Caledonia should be able to vote. This was our amendment, which they rejected in the French parliament in July 1984.

Now, about the elections [for the Territorial Assembly in New Caledonia in November 1984]. What happened in New Caledonia is not our fault, it is the fault of the French government. We told them that if they rejected our amendments we would boycott the elections. They said that if we boycotted they would send the army. We replied that the army has been here since 1853, and we are accustomed to seeing it and the violence it has brought.

So you can see that our struggle has not just begun, but has been going on since 1853. We need your support — international support — because geographically our country is small.

It is very small, and there are lots of army people there. Their boats are all around in the sea. They say this is to stop Russia or Cuba coming to help us. When they say they must protect us against Russia or against Cuba, we say that Cuba never colonised a country but we are colonised by France.



Militant/Holbrook Mahn

Susanna Ounei

SOUTH AFRICA

White Rule, Black Revolt
by Ernest Harsch

352 pp. \$7.95

Order from Pathfinder Press
410 West St.,
New York, NY 10014

Include .75 for postage and handling

Nutritional ruling — "While any adult who has not eaten for four days can certainly be described as hungry, the threat of



Harry Ring

starvation to such a person is not imminent." — The Iowa Court of Appeals rejecting an appeal from a man who broke into a supermarket because he was hungry.

A disciple of the Prince of Peace — To more efficiently conduct its illegal war against Nicaragua, the White House assigned Marine Lt. Col. Oliver North, a National Security Council member, to direct its mercenary *contra* force. Adolfo Calero, a *contra* head who meets regularly with North, assures, "he said nothing about breaking the law," and further advises that the White House honcho is "a devout Christian."

Capitalism at work — "WASHINGTON — The government projected today that American farmers will harvest huge corn and soybean crops this year, prompting fears of further distress for hard-pressed farm com-

munities..." — News item.

For sure — A Maine judge threw out most charges in a consumer protection case against Sears Roebuck. Brushing aside complaints about the sale of service contracts on appliances already covered by warranties, the judge affirmed that making a buck is "not yet an unfair trade practice."

Special service? — Among others, Boston area phone users got a \$1 monthly increase, with the company explaining, "The new charge is designed to help cover the costs of keeping phone lines constantly ready to send or receive calls."

Our rational society — To dramatize the sorry plight of companies victimized by having their top-dollar items counterfeited, the president of Cartier's stomped a pile of 25,000 fake Ferrari sunglasses under foot. The "real" ones are manufactured by Cartier's under license and retail for \$120. Who's the crook?

If he's thrifty — "I can afford to live in Manhattan now," Joe Moore, a Brooklynite who won \$13.6 million in the New York lottery.

Like cockroaches — When you bought that VCR, you thought you were home free on TV com-

mercials? That's temporary. "We as advertisers want to participate in using this medium," declares one Madison Ave. exec. "It is being tiptoed into, but the potential of the market demands that we do more than tiptoe."

Tiptoeing thru the tube — For openers in getting onto that VCR, companies are offering low-price, self-advertising "how to" cassettes. Like a "bartender's guide," plugging Mr. Boston. Or coming Esquire cassettes on such subjects as grooming and cooking, with plugs worked in for Vidal Sassoon, etc. Later, rented or bought cassettes will open and/or close with commercials. After that...?

—CALENDAR—

ARIZONA

Phoenix

The Struggle for Black Majority Rule in South Africa, panel discussion. Speakers: Siphon Cele, representative of African National Congress; Rev. C.E. Ligonis; James Kines, representative, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Elen Lauper, Socialist Workers Party mayoral candidate. Sat., Sept. 7, 7 p.m. 3750 West McDowell, Donation: \$2. Ausp.: Militant Labor Forum and Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (602) 272-4026.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

White Rule, Black Revolt — class series on South Africa:

1. "History of South Africa," Sat., Sept. 7, 3 p.m.;
2. "Women of South Africa," Sat., Sept. 14, 3 p.m.;
3. "The Struggle in South Africa," Sat., Sept. 21, 3 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Ausp.: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

San Francisco

Video: Adapt or Die, followed by panel discussion. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Sept. 13, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Donation: \$2. Ausp.: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

KENTUCKY

Louisville

Free South Africa! Videotape *Adapt or Die* followed by open discussion. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Sept. 8, 7 p.m. 809 E. Broadway. Donation: \$2. Ausp.: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (502) 587-8418.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Revolution in Burkina Faso: An Eyewitness Account. Speaker: Marla Puziss, recently returned from Burkina Faso, member International Association of Machinists Lodge 1784, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp.: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

Hear Susanna Ounei, Independence and Women's Rights Leader from New Caledonia. Mon., Sept. 9, 8 p.m. Jenkins Rm. 104, Morgan State University. Ausp.: Susanna Ounei Tour Committee, International Student Association, Morgan State University. For more information call (301) 433-8707.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

The Fight Against War in Central America. Featuring speakers who have recently returned from Central America: Prof. Jack Spence, University of Massachusetts; Dave Slaney, president, Local 2431 of United Steelworkers of America. Sat., Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Ave., 4th Floor. Ausp.: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

South Africa: Blacks Fight for Land, Rights, Liberation. Speakers: Ernest Harsch, managing editor, *Intercontinental Press*, and author of *South Africa: White Rule, Black Revolt*; representative, African National Congress. Sat., Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey. Donation: \$2. Ausp.: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Solidarity Festival. All-day fair for Salvadoran refugees. Noon to 6 p.m. Arts, crafts, films, poetry, Salvadoran food. 6-10 p.m., music by Lactamasi and Armando Martinez, film: *Decision to win*. Sat., Sept. 14. P.S. 41, West 11 St., near 6th Ave. Donation: \$1, noon to 6 p.m.; \$5, 6-10 p.m. Ausp: New York Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador and Casa El Salvador. For more information call (212) 926-5825, 242-1040.

Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Birth of Pedro Albizu Campos. Speaker: Pedro Albizu Meneses, economist and son of Albizu Campos. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. Casa de Las Americas, 104 West 14 St. Donation: \$5. For more information call (212) 584-1371 or (718) 388-5218.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

For Kanak Independence: the Fight Against French Rule in New Caledonia. Speaker: Susanna Ounei. Sat., Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m. Memorial Union, room 212, North Carolina A&T University. Ausp: Susanna Ounei Tour Committee. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

Women's Brunch with Susanna Ounei. Sat., Sept. 7, 11:30 a.m. Avalon House, 200 E. Bessemer. Ausp: Women in Concern for Central America. For more information call (919) 379-0508.

OHIO

Cincinnati

Eyewitness report from Nicaragua. Speaker: Michael Italie, member of Young Socialist Alliance, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Cincinnati City Council. Sat., Sept. 7, 7 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

OREGON

Portland

Adapt or Die, a TV documentary on Black trade unions in South Africa. Sat., Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m. 2732 NE Union. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

UTAH

Price

Campaign rally for Joe Geiser, Socialist Workers Candidate for Mayor of Price. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 23 S. Carbon Ave., Room 19. Ausp: Socialist Workers Campaign. For more information call (801) 637-6294.

Salt Lake City

South Africa: A People in Revolt. Speakers: Ian Barber, participant in anti-apartheid protests in New Zealand; Merrill Wallenstein, Young Socialist Alliance; others. Translation to

Spanish. Sat., Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m. 767 South State St. 3d floor. Donation: \$2 (\$1 for high school and unemployed). Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Reagan's Dirty War in Nicaragua: Eyewitness Report. Slideshow and discussion. Speaker: Chris Horner, member International Union of Electronic Workers, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Seattle mayor. Sat., Sept. 7, 7 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. South. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

For Kanak Independence: The Fight against French Rule in New Caledonia. Speaker: Susanna Ounei, official representative of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front. Moderator: Leonard Harvey, National Vice-chair for International Affairs, National Black United Front. Tues., Sept. 10. Reception 6 p.m.; program at 7 p.m. Undergraduate Library, Lecture Hall, Howard University. Ausp: National Black United Front, Howard University Student Association, Young Socialist Alliance, D.C. Unit Provisional Government of New Africa.

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OCAW merges with Paperworkers union

Continued from back page
American jobs."

"How can you have a strong defense with one-half of the steel industry and no electronics industry?" Glenn asked.

In answer to objections to salary increases for OCAW officials, Glenn reported that Paperworkers officials were already "well-paid," and rhetorically asked, "Do you expect a merged union to set up a two-tier wage structure?"

As for forced amalgamation of locals, Glenn responded that "the EEOC [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission] made us eliminate charters for Blacks — and in some cases the courts forced us to. That's the only forced amalgamations we've had."

Glenn pledged no forced amalgamations in a new union.

Debate reopened

After Glenn left the platform near the end of the session Wednesday a motion was introduced and passed to reopen debate on merger.

The first delegate to take the floor when discussion opened the next morning was Anthony Mazzocchi. A rank-and-file delegate, Mazzocchi was formerly an OCAW international vice-president. He came very close to winning a bid for the presidency in 1979 and again in 1981.

Whatever the decision here today, Mazzocchi said, "let's go out of here in a spirit of trade unionism and justice."

In arguing for merger, "our leaders say there is a crisis," Mazzocchi said. Their solution, however, is "grasping at straws."

"It all means nothing if we do not stand for something. We need an agenda in order to capture the minds of the people of this country," Mazzocchi continued. "A lot of people think unions are unnecessary — even my children — much less unorganized workers."

"We have three tasks. First organize the unorganized. Second, organize the organized — our own members, who are alienated from their own organization," Mazzocchi told the convention. "And third, organize the unemployed."

"After the 1955 merger, we initiated great strikes, militant actions. Today it's the corporations who initiate the fights," Mazzocchi said. In order to "confront corporate power" the union movement must "recapture a crusading spirit."

Debate was cut off after less than an hour. The new vote tally revealed 70,336 for merger and 34,445 against. With 69,857 required for passage, it passed by only 479 votes.

A total of 545 delegates were registered. Delegates wielded voting strength based on the number of members they represented. More than 100 others attended as alternates or observers.

On the last day the current international officers were returned unopposed to their posts.

The headquarters of the merged union

will be in Nashville, site of the Paperworkers offices.

The base of the Paperworkers strength is in the big paper mills, which produce tons of newsprint daily.

According to the OCAW Publicity Director Gerald Archuleta, the current OCAW membership breaks down roughly as follows: 45,000 in oil; 8,000 in atomic (including processors and reproducers of nuclear fuel, and uranium miners); 50,000 in chemical (including pharmaceuticals, paints, plastics, cosmetics, household products produced by 3M and Union Carbide, among others); plus a small number in miscellaneous areas.

'Merger won't strengthen OCAW'

Joanne Kuniarsky, an activist in OCAW Local 4-227 in the Houston area and a member of the Socialist Workers Party, told the this merger will not strengthen oil, chemical, and atomic workers in facing up to the challenges before us.

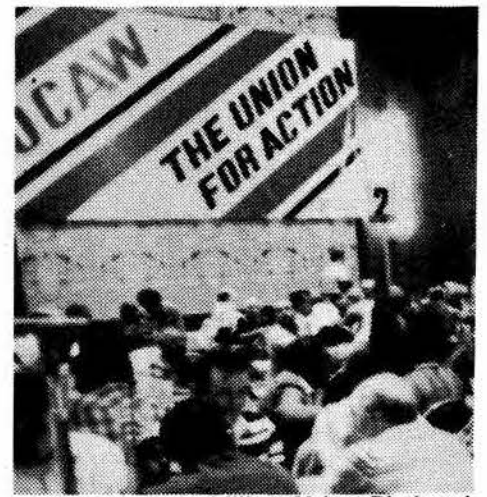
"If anything, we'll be weaker because this merger will dilute the strategic base and focus of our union within the industrial sectors of its origin," Kuniarsky con-

tinued. "It will weaken our striking power."

"For example," she said, "in the last 10 years the most solid, militant resistance to the employer offensive against working people has been mounted by the United Mine Workers. Despite its small size, it is a cohesive union centered in one industry, coal mining. Unions organizing many different categories of workers — even big unions — have proven incapable of fighting back as effectively."

She also pointed to the battle rank-and-file miners had waged to democratize their union and how "a more democratic union is a stronger and more combative union. The further restrictions adopted here," Kuniarsky said, "will weaken us."

Merging with unions in another industry doesn't address "the urgent need to mobilize a no-holds-barred fight to counter the employer and government offensive against us and their war against our brothers and sisters in South Africa and Central America," Kuniarsky said. "That will require a whole new outlook that rejects the line of false 'friends of labor' in the Democratic Party and looks to the ranks to revitalize the unions."



Militant/Nelson Blackstock
'Merger will weaken OCAW by diluting its base within industrial sectors of its origin.'

"These issues will be discussed in the new merged union as they have been in the OCAW," Kuniarsky concluded. "And I look forward to meeting the brothers and sisters from the Paperworkers."

Interview with Anthony Mazzocchi

BY NELSON BLACKSTOCK

DENVER — Anthony Mazzocchi, former vice president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW), gained a reputation in the late 1970s as one of the most progressive voices in the upper echelons of the trade union movement. In both 1979 and 1980 Mazzocchi came close to winning the presidency of the union.

While Mazzocchi attended this year's OCAW convention as a rank-and-file delegate, he remains a leading force within the union.

In an interview with the *Militant* on the last day of the convention, Mazzocchi talked about what took place here and his views on a variety of issues.

As for the merger, Mazzocchi said, "The debate we wanted never took place."

"The debate we wanted was over how should a union be constructed to deal with the whole new set of economic and political realities that exist. You cannot confront these new realities with the structures of the past, and certainly not with one that is going to be highly bureaucratized — that is not going to be able to recapture the minds and spirit of the membership."

Mazzocchi said, "There was a sense of despair that manifested itself here in the delegates that were for merger: 'What else is there to do?'"

In the end, "they barely won the vote," he noted. "They had the whole international apparatus and everything that goes with it. We couldn't give any favors out. We couldn't promise any jobs, either tem-

porary or permanent. All we could do is appeal to a consciousness that was out there."

Concerning his brief remarks in the convention debate, Mazzocchi said, "We attempted to point out that the real problem here is that we've lost our own members [identification with the union]. We're not dealing with the reality of the unorganized."

"But I consider the most important problem is the unemployed," Mazzocchi continued. "I don't think we can organize the unorganized unless we organize the unemployed."

"It's easy to replace strikers today — to replace union members with former union members, who are disillusioned because when they're laid off everyone forgets them."

Mazzocchi would have liked for the OCAW to have worked with other unions to help "create a massive organization of the unemployed that works along with the employed and organized."

Mazzocchi recalled that when he ran for OCAW president, "I had as a key component of my platform a labor party."

Mazzocchi thinks the first step toward a labor party now is to form an "association."

"If I were a union president I'd begin to hire organizers — to get an association going that hammers out an agenda."

"The best thing we can do now is to remove ourselves from the electoral process and begin to develop an agenda," he said. "Do what the right wing has done so successfully. They've done it because they have an ideology. They're not involved in electoral politics to any appreciable degree, but they're dragging everybody over to discuss their agenda."

"The debate is framed in terms of the bosses. The Democratic and Republican parties — it's the same agenda. A lot of people perceive that, but not given an alternate discussion, they're trapped into it."

Mazzocchi refers often to what he calls a "new agenda." "I firmly believe people will mobilize around a new agenda," he said. "I'm convinced if the trade union movement would position itself the way the CIO did, we would attract all sorts of people, good people," outside the trade unions.

As part of a new agenda, Mazzocchi favors what he calls "reverse seniority" as an alternative to affirmative action.

"I never believed affirmative action was very effective," Mazzocchi said, although he "would not oppose it" and supports "specific programs."

Under his proposal, "workers with the most seniority get a chance out — to open up the bottom. You go out with full pay — and you accrue any pay increases you would have been due had you been working."

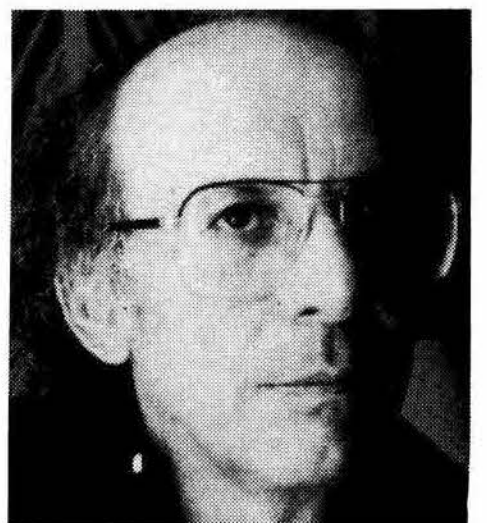
"This is the only way you allow people into the work force without having minority workers fighting existing workers,"

Mazzocchi said.

This, he believes, will lead to another discussion. "There's a lot of capital available. It's a question of how that capital is invested. The boss has to pay. Everybody is entitled to a job or income. If you don't have jobs, you're entitled to full income. There's a lot of capital around. The defense budget, to begin with."

Mazzocchi condemned "all the jingoism coming out of the top ranks of the AFL-CIO. It's very dangerous. 'Don't act in unison with foreign workers. They're the enemy.'"

As for protectionist talk heard at the convention here, Mazzocchi said, "Unless you open up a discussion on how you deal with that situation in a way that's totally different, the jingoism of protectionism prevails. It's the most dangerous situation that exists in the labor movement today."



Militant/Nelson Blackstock
Anthony Mazzocchi

OCAW's antiwar resolution

The following is excerpted from a resolution adopted by the recent convention of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union in Denver. It was submitted by the international administrative officers.

The same resolution also condemned apartheid in South Africa, along with U.S. policy toward that country. (That section was printed in last week's *Militant*.)

In a number of countries in Central and South America death squads with only thinly disguised ties to repressive governments, often embraced by the Reagan Administration, continue each year to kill many thousands of democratic trade union and political activists, as well as ordinary citizens.

Indeed under the present Administration the historical pattern of U.S. interventionism in Central America and the Caribbean has not only been reaffirmed but stepped up through weapons shipments, clandestine support of forces attempting to destabilize or overthrow governments and technical support such as intelligence overflights and economic harassment of regimes perceived to be unfriendly. The cur-

rent target in this regard is, of course, Nicaragua.

And despite the fact that a majority of the American people strongly oppose the introduction of American troops to the area fearing it would lead to actual U.S. involvement in armed conflict, anti-guerrilla operations, and another no-win Vietnam, this Administration has introduced thousands of U.S. soldiers into Honduras, turning that country into a U.S. military base without specific authorization of Congress.

At the same time that increasing millions of dollars are being sought for arms and assistance, essential social and public services in the United States are being drastically cut by the Administration and increasing burdens are being placed on workers, the poor, the ill and the elderly.

* * *

We call for:

Condemnation of the policies and actions of this Administration that seem clearly designed to use American military force to attempt to solve the economic, political and social problems of Central America.

Reagan's War on Women's Rights
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by Margaret Jayko

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How workers won Social Security

The Social Security Act was signed into law 50 years ago on Aug. 14, 1935. It marked an important advance for the working people of this country, even though the benefits and scope of coverage remain stingy and inadequate.

Retired or aging workers and farmers still face an insecure future. Many old people are homeless, go hungry, or cannot afford medical care.

But before working people won social security, old age was a much grimmer prospect.

If able to work, they had to accept any starvation-wage job they could get — if there were any jobs to be had.

If unable to work, they had to rely on their families or on charity. Such support was highly uncertain, especially when the capitalist economic cycle threw tens of millions out of work as in the 1930s.

Bare survival was an uphill battle — often an impossible one — and even a modestly comfortable retirement was almost out of the question.

In the years after 1935, working people succeeded in increasing social security benefits, and extending coverage to farmers, agricultural workers, survivors of social security recipients, and others.

A big expansion of coverage and benefits is needed to make an economically secure retirement possible for workers and farmers.

Today social security is under attack. But the program has such deep-rooted support among workers and farmers that the rulers have not been able so far to do more than chip away at it.

Some of the attacks — all of them supported by politicians of both capitalist parties — are cited in the August 10 *AFL-CIO News*:

"President Reagan and Congress have rolled back benefits upon retirement for those at the lowest income level, phased out benefits for college students, eliminated the parent's benefit when the youngest child reaches 16, slashed Medicare and Medicaid outlays, delayed cost-of-living increases, and raised the retirement age to 66 by the year 2020, and to 67 by the year 2027."

The employers and their government try to justify these attacks by treating social security as a giveaway program and social security recipients as freeloaders. Nothing could be further from the truth.

It is the millionaires who are the freeloaders. They live off the wealth that they expropriate from the workers and farmers who are the creators of wealth.

Social security is a form of deferred wages, which

working people have forced the employing class and its government to pay us during our retirement years.

The *AFL-CIO News* stresses the need to fight cuts in social security. But the article includes a version of how social security was won which misleads working people who are thinking about how to defend this important gain.

The *AFL-CIO News* attributes social security to the good will of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt "was moving the nation into a vast new arena, putting a floor of economic security under Americans demoralized and left destitute by the Great Depression," it claims.

In reality, social security was won during a rising tide of struggles by workers, farmers, and other oppressed people. It came in the wake of successful organizing drives by the United Mine Workers, International Ladies' Garment Workers', and Amalgamated Clothing Workers unions. It followed successful and hard-fought strikes by truck drivers in Minneapolis, longshore workers in San Francisco, and auto workers in Toledo.

It was won as Blacks struggled against frame-ups and lynch law in the South and farmers battled foreclosures. And it followed growing protests by the elderly and their supporters demanding the right to pensions.

In a June 8, 1934, message to Congress, Roosevelt warned that the lack of even minimal pensions for the aged "contribute[s] to social unrest."

The coming years will see sharper attacks on social security, along with more aggressive attempts to weaken and destroy the union movement and other conquests of working people. Such efforts are built into the deepening economic difficulties of the capitalist system and the employer-government drive to make workers and farmers pay for the rulers' crisis.

In defending these gains and fighting to advance beyond them, working people will have to rely on their own power — the power of mass action — and not on the good will of capitalist politicians.

Resistance to the coming attempts of the ruling class to radically reduce the living standards and rights of working people will open up a period of sharp struggles between the employing class on one side, and the workers, exploited farmers, and their allies on the other.

These battles will create the conditions for replacing the capitalist government with a government of the workers and farmers. That is the way real economic security will be guaranteed for every working person.

Oppose new U.S. weapons test

Washington has announced that it will go ahead with plans to test an antisatellite weapon in space. This weapon is intended for use against Soviet satellites.

The announcement of this test followed the U.S. government's refusal to join the Soviet Union in ending nuclear bomb tests. On July 29, Moscow unilaterally announced a moratorium on testing and urged Washington to do the same.

Earlier Washington dismissed Soviet moves to freeze the number of nuclear missiles in Europe, and to cut the number of intercontinental ballistic missile launchers by 25 percent.

Both the Democratic and Republican parties support the Pentagon's massive arms buildup. In recent months, the Reagan administration won bipartisan congressional approval of billions for "star wars" research; the construction of MX missiles; and the ending of a 16-year moratorium on production of nerve gas.

The Reagan administration, and the Republicans and Democrats in Congress, are making it clear that the U.S. arms buildup will continue, regardless of whether upcoming talks between Washington and Moscow result in new arms control agreements.

The U.S. rulers are pressing ahead because they need a massive nuclear and conventional arsenal in order to try to preserve their empire.

From South Africa to Central America to the Philippines, U.S. big business' domination of much of the world's resources and people is being challenged. Long-suppressed peoples are rising up to assert their right to self-determination, democracy, and a better standard of living.

The U.S. nuclear arsenal is the ultimate weapon of the U.S. war machine. This is the same war machine that is today arming and organizing the counterrevolutionaries who are raping and murdering thousands of Nicaraguans.

It is the same war machine that helps the racist South African government aid reactionary forces trying to overthrow the government of Angola.

In the Korean War, during the Cuban missile crisis, and many other times up to the present, Washington has hinted at or openly threatened the use of nuclear weapons against people who refused to accept its domination.

Ultimately Washington dreams of gaining sufficient

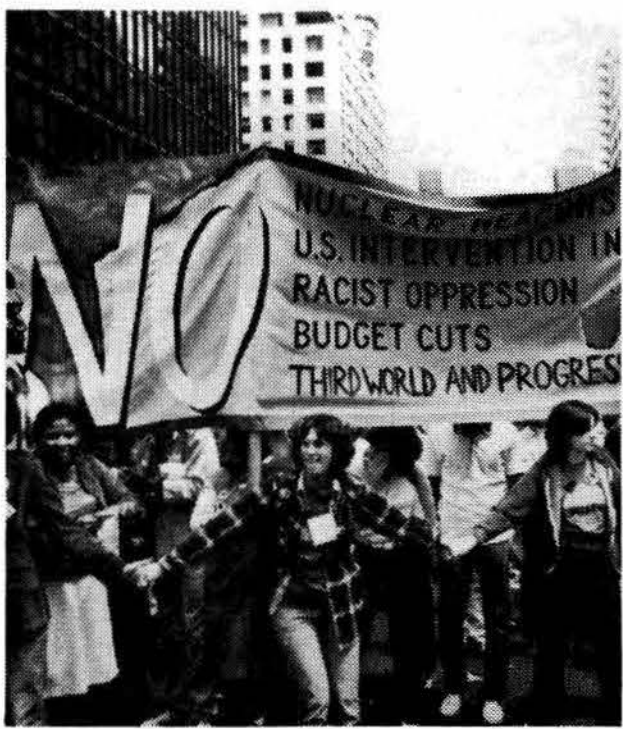
military advantage to make possible the overturn of the Soviet Union and the other workers' states where capitalism has been abolished.

It is Washington that has initiated every new weapon of mass destruction and every escalation of the arms buildup, forcing the Soviet Union to respond in self-defense.

Because U.S. imperialism is driven to try to subjugate and exploit the working people of the whole world, it cannot give up its nuclear or conventional arsenal. To the contrary, it keeps expanding it.

The U.S. rulers recently staged a grisly commemoration of the nuclear massacres they carried out in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Those events are a reminder that the U.S. nuclear arsenal is a threat to all humanity.

Washington's nuclear buildup, including the upcoming antisatellite weapons test, must be opposed.



Engels on unions and the fight for political power

In 1881 Frederick Engels — the collaborator of Karl Marx in forging the modern communist movement — wrote a series of articles for *The Labour Standard* of Britain on the trade unions. Following is an abridged version of one of the articles.

The series of articles is collected in a pamphlet called *The Wages System*. It may be obtained from Pathfinder Press. Send 95 cents, plus 75 cents for shipping and handling to Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

So far we have considered the functions of Trades Unions as far only as they contribute to the regulation of the rate of wages and ensure to the labourer, in his struggle against capital, at least some means of resistance. But that aspect does not exhaust our subject.

The struggle of the labourer against capital, we said. That struggle does exist, whatever the apologists of capital may say to the contrary.

It will exist so long as a reduction of wages remains the safest and readiest means of raising profits; nay, so long as the wages system itself shall exist.

The very existence of Trades Unions is proof sufficient of the fact; if they are not made to fight against the encroachments of capital what are they made for? There is

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

no use in mincing matters. No milksop words can hide the ugly fact that present society is mainly divided into two great antagonistic classes — into capitalists, the owners of all the means for the employment of labour, on one side; and working men, the owners of nothing but their own working power, on the other.

The produce of the labour of the latter class has to be divided between both classes, and it is this division about which the struggle is constantly going on. Each class tries to get as large a share as possible; and it is the most curious aspect of this struggle that the working class, while fighting to obtain a share only of its own produce, is often enough accused of actually robbing the capitalist!

But a struggle between two great classes of society necessarily becomes a political struggle. So did the long battle between the middle or capitalist class and the landed aristocracy; so also does the fight between the working class and these same capitalists.

In every struggle of class against class, the next end fought for is political power; the ruling class defends its political supremacy, that is to say its safe majority in the Legislature; the inferior class fights for, first a share, then the whole of that power, in order to become enabled to change existing laws in conformity with their own interests and requirements.

According to the traditions of their origin and development in this country, these powerful organisations [trade unions] have hitherto limited themselves almost strictly to their function of sharing in the regulation of wages and working hours, and of enforcing the repeal of laws openly hostile to the workmen.

As stated before, they have done so with quite as much effect as they had a right to expect.

But they have attained more than that — the ruling class, which knows their strength better than they themselves do, has volunteered to them concessions beyond that. [Former British Prime Minister] Disraeli's Household Suffrage gave the vote to at least the greater portion of the organised working class.

That very measure opened out a new prospect to the working class. It gave them the majority in London and in all manufacturing towns, and thus enabled them to enter into the struggle against capital with new weapons, by sending men of their own class to Parliament.

And here, we are sorry to say, the Trades Unions forgot their duty as the advanced guard of the working class. The new weapon has been in their hands for more than ten years, but they scarcely ever unsheathed it. They ought not to forget that they cannot continue to hold the position they now occupy unless they really march in the van [vanguard] of the working class.

Thus there are two points which the organised Trades would do well to consider, firstly, that the time is rapidly approaching when the working class of this country will claim, with a voice not to be mistaken, its full share of representation in Parliament.

Secondly, that the time also is rapidly approaching when the working class will have understood that the struggle for high wages and short hours, and the whole action of Trades Unions as now carried on, is not an end in itself, but a means, a very necessary and effective means, but only one of several means towards a higher end: the abolition of the wages system altogether.

For the full representation of labour in Parliament as well as for the preparation of the abolition of the wages system, organisations will become necessary, not of separate Trades, but of the working class as a body.

And the sooner this is done the better. There is no power in the world which could for a day resist the British working class organised as a body.

'The Nation Thief': 1855 invasion of Nicaragua

The Nation Thief by Robert Houston. Ballantine Books, N.Y. \$3.50, 1984, 240 pages, paper.

BY ROBERT CONNOLLY

The novel *The Nation Thief* is about William Walker's 1855 invasion of Nicaragua and his invasion of Honduras five years later. The author, Robert Houston, notes that the novel is based for the most part on historical records. The interpretation and dramatization of these records are his own.

Houston pays tribute to the people of Nicaragua, "territorio libre, who helped me come to know their coun-

BOOK REVIEW

try." In researching *The Nation Thief*, Houston traveled extensively in post-revolutionary Nicaragua.

Walker's invasion is skillfully described through narratives of 10 participants and observers. These include members of his mercenary army, the U.S. ambassador, the capitalist Cornelius Vanderbilt, native Nicaraguans, and others. This method provides the reader with a picture of the motives and reactions of those connected to the events.

Houston does not fall for simply portraying Walker as a fringe element or power-hungry lunatic. Walker's invasion is placed in the context of the recently concluded Mexican-American War and the upcoming U.S. Civil War.

He explains the key role of free transit through Nicaragua at a time when there was no Panama Canal. Controlling this route was one of Walker's chief objectives.

Walker attempted to establish slavery in Nicaragua.

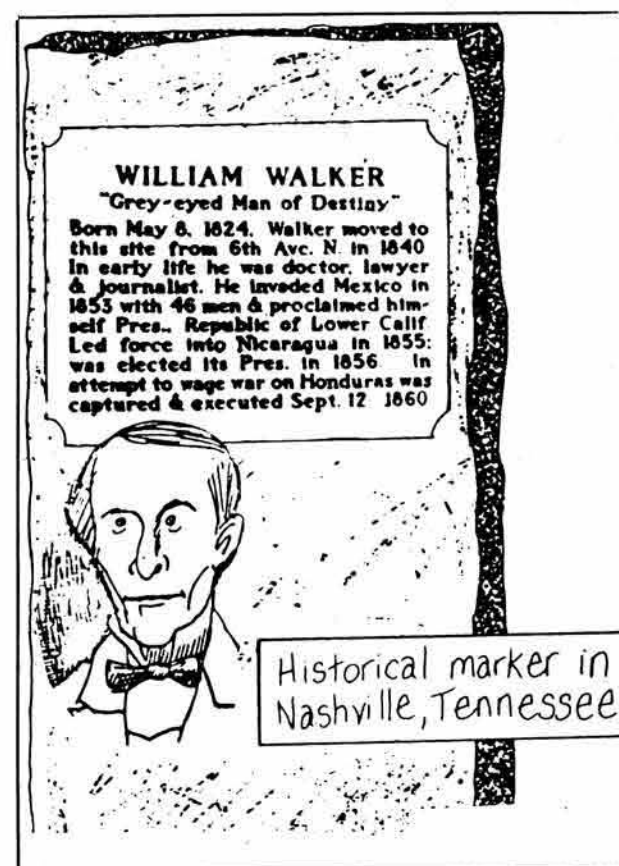
This plan was described by the U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua at the time:

"Yet let me share a dream with you that William Walker shared with me after his assumption of the presidency of Nicaragua. Imagine a great American-led, Anglo-Saxon empire, my friends, extending from South America through the entire isthmus of Central America, reaching into the Caribbean to embrace Cuba, and eventually moving north through all of Mexico to the border of the United States itself. Is it not a grand and noble dream? Do not we in America, who have been so smiled upon by the Creator, deserve the right to dream it?"

"It was William Walker's dream. It remains my dream still. If the government I represented has not the capacity to dream it with us, then I say let war come between the North and the South. Let us create a government which knows its own interests, which dares to dream with us. Let us unfetter our William Walkers, that they may lead us into the future."

The final part of the book deals with Walker's attempt to invade Honduras, seeing it as a possible route back to Nicaragua. It was during this last invasion that Walker was finally captured and executed for his crimes.

The Nation Thief provides an excellent examination of the first U.S. invasion of Nicaragua. It is valuable reading as U.S. imperialism is waging yet another war against the people of Nicaragua.



Cincinnati GE workers discuss vote on contract

BY VAL LIBBY
AND BOB CONNOLLY

CINCINNATI — This summer, members of United Auto Workers Local 647 voted by a large majority to ratify a new three-year contract with General Electric. The local represents more than 4,000 production workers at the GE aircraft engine plant in Evendale, Ohio.

The contract contained a number of concessions by the union to the company. These included doubling the de-

and stay there for six months before beginning to move toward top pay.

Evendale workers were angered and surprised at the paltry wage offer and increased cost of medical coverage.

Only a few months ago, Cincinnati newspapers reported on GE's \$9 billion in super-profits and their virtual non-payment of taxes over the last three years. Business at the Evendale plant is booming. Hundreds have been hired, but management has tried to put the burden of increased production on the backs of union members through a drive to speed up the existing work force.

The UAW leadership correctly exposed GE's use of an Air Force audit as an excuse to crack down on company work rules and harass those who resisted both the speed-up and crackdown.

Workers are being told they are supposed to run 100 percent efficiency — no questions asked. Unresolved grievances over efficiency, harassment, and widespread contracting out of work led the UAW to walk off the job for nine days last February.

Production workers point out that the company demands 100 percent efficiency yet refuses to provide the required tooling.

Other GE locals around the country voted for the master contract. Most workers here began to feel we had to

vote yes, too, despite widespread concern about the productivity crackdown. GE management at Evendale remained intransigent on these local issues.

On July 13 the company walked out of negotiations with the UAW. The next day the old contract expired and UAW 647 handed the company an official 10-day strike notice.

In the last few days before the UAW vote, discussions continued as we tried to balance the fight we face on productivity, speed-up, and harassment with the contract vote as a whole.

Finally, Bill Adams, Local 647 president, reported what he termed a modest improvement in the union's ability to defend members disciplined on productivity issues. When disciplinary action is planned by the company, there will be a two-week waiting period during which the union will have the opportunity to prepare the best possible defense of its members.

One coworker summed up the majority sentiment: "We have to vote yes because everybody else did, and we can't take GE on ourselves. The company will keep pushing on productivity until they downgrade someone off a machine or fire someone for efficiency — then we'll have to take a walk."

Val Libby and Bob Connolly are members of UAW Local 647 at Evendale.

UNION TALK

ductible for medical coverage and a wage freeze for the first year with only a 3 percent increase in each of the remaining two years. A lump sum 3 percent "bonus" was paid when the contract was ratified that will never be figured into the hourly rate.

Steps toward a two-tier wage system were instituted. Unfortunately, this divisive, union-weakening move wasn't a topic of discussion at the plant. Most workers were never informed of the new wage structure. Under the old contract new hires to the general labor pool, called Service and Support, started two labor grades below the top grade for the job and advanced to full pay in 40 days. Now new hires will start four grades below

LETTERS

Satchel Paige

In the article on the Kansas City farm rally held August 17 in the August 30 *Militant*, there is an unfortunate misspelling. Satchel Paige Stadium is incorrectly spelled "Shecelel" Paige Stadium.

Satchel Paige was a legendary pitcher whose baseball career began and largely took place in the relative obscurity of the old Negro Leagues.

In 1948 the color barrier was broken by Jackie Robinson. After he had been pitching professionally for 24 years, Paige was signed on by the Cleveland Indians. He became the first Black to pitch in the major leagues.

Over his close to three decades as a professional athlete, Paige compiled a remarkable record. By one estimate he worked a total of 2,500 games, winning at least 2,000 including about 250 shut-outs and 45 no-hitters.

After playing against him in an exhibition game in 1937, New York Yankee star Joe DiMaggio said that Paige was the greatest pitcher he had ever faced.

Following Paige's death in 1982, the Black community in his home town of Kansas City, Missouri, won a fight with the city government and had a baseball stadium built in his name.

Rev. "Fuzzy" Thompson, head of the Kansas City Southern Chris-

tian Leadership Conference, said at the August 17 farm rally, "Satchel Paige would have been proud to have a rally like this held in a stadium named in his honor."

Jeff Powers
Kansas City, Missouri

Ricardo Romero

Most readers of the *Militant* have heard of Ricardo Romero, one of five political prisoners sentenced in June 1983 for refusing to testify before a federal grand jury about the Puerto Rican independence movement.

The following is condensed from a recent newsletter. It is an example of the brutal treatment that can be expected by those whose crime is believing in humanity and opposing government policy.

Ricardo was recently transferred from Safford, Arizona, to the Springfield Medical Center in Missouri.

He suffers from a back injury which by February 1985 had become severe. He asked for medical treatment which was refused, except for aspirin.

By June he could not walk because of the intense pain in his back and legs.

Fellow inmates at Safford carried him to and from meals so he could eat.

By the end of June he could not

get out of his bunk.

Nothing was done to help him, but finally it was agreed to transfer him to Springfield.

Instead of a direct transfer, here is the route Ricardo, in serious physical condition, was forced to take: from Safford to Tucson is about 100 miles, usually a three-hour trip. This time it took six hours.

Ricardo was forced to sit with hands chained to waist and ankle chains. He was kept at Tucson for five days in great pain.

From there to San Diego, a 21-hour trip, during which he was given one meal and no water. On to Terminal Island in Long Beach, where the motor went out on the plane.

Ricardo was taken out, left on the runway for six hours, shackled, with no food, water, or restroom facilities.

At 3 a.m. the following morning he was taken to Vandenberg Air Force base in Sacramento, then to Denver, and then to El Reno, Oklahoma. The following day from El Reno to Springfield.

The choice of this long and painful route was deliberate. The family had asked to pay transportation cost for a direct flight from Tucson to Springfield, but were refused.

Despite all this, Ricardo is strongly committed not only to

Puerto Rican independence, but to national liberation struggles throughout the world.

We can support him by writing, Ricardo Romero, 16208-053, U.S. Medical Center, Springfield, Missouri 65808.

(Commissary money will only be accepted by the prison if it is a postal money order or a cashier's check.)

Lois Remple
Pueblo, Colorado

Phelps Dodge

Labor Day presents a bleak outlook for organized labor in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Well into the third year of a 16-union copper strike against the Phelps Dodge Corporation, contract resolutions and negotiations are unlikely to be exhumed for copper miners in the southwest.

Most devastating was the recent decertification of the unions at the Clifton-Morenci mine in eastern Arizona.

Phelps Dodge also owns a South African fluorspar mine.

In 1980, Phelps Dodge released 2,000 Black South African workers. The company transported them back to the Transkei Bantustan and hired foreign workers. The Transkei workers had protested a 55 cents an hour wage.

P.D.'s labor relations in this country have not been much better.

In 1917, 1,200 union members were herded into boxcars and dumped off in the New Mexico desert only to be saved by the U.S. Army.

Up until four years ago a worker's schedule was made up of 26 days on and two off.

In Morenci, P.D. recently closed one of its full-service, 49-bed hospitals. The next closest hospital is Mount Graham Hospital, 45 miles away.

The Peoples Clinic — run by Dr. Jorge O'Leary who was fired by P.D. for treating striking miners — does not have adequate facilities to handle a severe injury or disaster.

Ed Martin
Phoenix, Arizona

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

OCAW votes to merge with Paperworkers

BY NELSON BLACKSTOCK

DENVER — The Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) narrowly approved a proposal to merge with the United Paperworkers International Union at its national convention here August 19-23.

The merger will not become final until it is voted on by the Paperworkers at their convention, where approval appears certain. The new union will be called the United Paper, Energy and Chemical Workers International Union.

The merger proposal, which was advanced by the OCAW's international officers, met with strong opposition. It passed only after a second vote was taken, failing to win the required two-thirds the first time.

Merger opponents focused on curbs on union democracy under the proposed new constitution.

Officials argue for merger

In opening remarks, OCAW President Joseph Misbrenner laid the basis for the merger proposal by painting a picture of a shrinking union suffering under the blows of a broad employer offensive.

OCAW membership, Misbrenner pointed out, has sharply declined to less than 110,000. Many jobs have been lost through refinery closures, as well as shutdowns in industries organized by the chemical and atomic sections of the union.

Attacks on local bargaining agreements forced long strikes at Texaco and Sun Oil, Misbrenner said. Workers remain locked out in a lengthy dispute in Louisiana.

The international has been forced to trim staff at all levels as a result of a decline in the dues base, the president reported. In a controversial move, the union was left without a human relations director when the former director was reassigned to a post in the field.

Misbrenner said the merger agreement before the convention was a good one, though not perfect. Previous conventions had mandated officials to seek merger with another union.

The OCAW had been fortunate to reach an agreement with a union with similar "jurisdiction and philosophy of trade unionism," Misbrenner said. "Making paper is a pure chemical process."

Critics of the merger disputed the claim of similarity of jurisdiction and noted that only a small percentage of the two unions work for the same employer.

Misbrenner said the merger would result in a bigger, more powerful union. The combined membership of the merged union would be 365,000.

"What we win at the bargaining table is taken away in the legislative hall," Misbrenner said. "With combined strength and brainpower we can be tremendously more influential."

Vice-president Calvin Moore cited attacks on civil rights and affirmative action as one aspect of the assault workers face.

Merger advocates made much of the fact that the OCAW itself was formed by the merger of two international unions in 1955.

Officials argued that a bigger union would have more clout in Democratic Party politics. It could more effectively press for anti-imports, protectionist legislation, they said. (This is in line with demands by smaller, "independent" refiners for such laws.)

Merger opponents take the floor

During floor debate, opponents of the merger got a chance to put their views forward. In the weeks leading up to the convention the Committee for Facts Concerning the Merger circulated literature against the proposal.

The committee branded the merger as "the absorption of a democratically (though misguided) run union by a union whose leadership defies every perception of what union democracy is all about."

The March-April issue of the OCAW-Reporter printed the merger agreement in full. It includes a new constitution that in-

corporates major provisions from the Paperworkers constitution, which vests more power directly in the hands of top officials than the current OCAW constitution does.

The agreement also guarantees posts for current top officers, along with generous pay boosts. International representatives would receive \$10,000 annual raises.

"The only thing I see is guaranteed jobs and wage increases for the international officers and reps," said one delegate during the debate.

"This merger benefits only two union bureaucracies," charged Vern Jensen, District 8 Council president.

Much of the opposition was centered in District 4 (Texas and Louisiana), District 3 (Southeast), and District 8 (Northeast).

"The Paperworkers have a philosophy of rule from the top down rather than bottom up," Jensen asserted.

Delegates charged that under the agreement any member could be subject to disciplinary action if they failed to support policy set by the president.

Many objected to a provision in the Paperworkers constitution that would appear to force the acceptance of management's final offer in contract negotiations unless two-thirds of the membership votes to strike, thus weakening the hand of the union.

"No wonder Paperworkers in east Jersey make a lot less than oil workers," Jensen exclaimed.

Although the merger agreement states this procedure would not apply to OCAW members in a new union, opponents argued that it would be imposed on them once the merger went through.

Bill Taylor, president of a large Chicago-area local and leader of the Com-



Militant/Nelson Blackstock

Merger was narrowly approved by convention after lively debate.

mittee on Minority Affairs, said, "Our program should be to organize the unorganized, not merging to gain members," pointing to the millions of unorganized.

Others, favoring merger, said they could see no reason not to merge to form a bigger, and therefore stronger, union. Some saw joining the two unions as a simple act of "solidarity." "OCAW + UPW = Solidarity," proclaimed a button worn by some delegates.

The campaign for merger was pressed by an "OCAW Rank and File Committee for Merger." It sold T-shirts emblazoned with "We've got the urge to merge."

During the discussion President Misbrenner called one speaker for, then one against. Passage of a motion to close debate the second day, Tuesday, ended dis-

cussion sooner than many expected. But when the results of the roll call vote were announced, the merger proposal had fallen short of the two-thirds needed.

Paperworkers president speaks

The following afternoon Paperworkers President Wayne Glenn appeared to deliver a speech and answer questions.

Glenn recounted the 101-year history of the Paperworkers, highlighting some of the militant episodes.

"Unions are losing strength," Glenn said. "American labor unions must circle their wagons."

Merger would "increase strength in the political arena," Glenn said, enabling the union to "answer Reagan on exporting of

Continued on Page 17

5,000 support Wheeling-Pitt strikers

BY MARY NELL BOCKMAN

STEUBENVILLE, Ohio — The biggest outpouring of support yet for striking workers at Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corp. took place here at a rally of about 5,000 unionists. It was sponsored by the United Steelworkers of America (USWA).

Wearing T-shirts declaring "We won't be a second PATCO," the strikers vowed to continue their walkout until they win a decent contract.

The steelworkers were forced out July 21 when the company tore up its contract with the union after getting a bankruptcy court judge to rubber-stamp the action.

A federal district court judge in Pittsburgh upheld this antilabor ruling August 28.

The company-imposed takebacks amount to tens of millions in wages, insurance, pension payments, and vacation time. The bosses also abolished the grievance procedure and proclaimed the right to change wages, benefits, and working conditions at any time.

While demanding that workers bear the burden of the company's \$540 million debt, executives of Wheeling-Pittsburgh went to court last week to guarantee their own salaries and pension plans. The so-called "golden parachute" protection would give Chairman Dennis Carney in excess of \$1 million in salary and severance pay should he lose his position.

Strikers at Wheeling-Pittsburgh won a victory when the Ohio Unemployment Compensation Board ruled in favor of USWA members' claims for unemployment compensation. The board upheld the union's contention that by tearing up the union contract, the company had locked out workers in the nine mills.

Steelworkers in West Virginia and Pennsylvania are still awaiting decisions on unemployment compensation.

The spirits of strikers and their supporters were high at the rally, which was held outside the gates of the Wheeling-

Pittsburgh steel mill. Speakers pointed to the negative impact on all unions should the company achieve its aims.

Tony Bambico, international representative for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) District 6, pledged his union's full support to the steelworkers.

"The front line you occupy today has been manned frequently by coal miners. We are willing to stand by you no matter

what the consequences," he said.

UMWA members were highly visible at the rally carrying bright yellow signs stating, "Your fight is our fight. UMWA supports USWA."

Miners have also staffed picket lines in Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Buses came to the rally from five districts of the USWA. A 35-car caravan from

Continued on Page 6

Kanak leader speaks in Ala.

BY BETH FINNEAS

BIRMINGHAM — "Neither French troops nor harassment and imprisonment of our youth, nor assassinations of our leaders will stop our determination to fight for the dignity of our people," explained Susanna Ounei, a leader of the Kanak people of the South Pacific island nation of New Caledonia.

Ounei visited here August 25 and 26 as part of a nationwide tour to get out the truth about the apartheid-like system of French colonial domination of New Caledonia and the struggle of the Kanak people for independence.

A gathering of 40 people listened in-

For background on freedom struggle in New Caledonia, see page 15.

tently as Ounei explained the history of oppression and exploitation of the Kanaks by the French settlers. The meeting, held at St. Joseph Baptist Church, was sponsored by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Lodestar Books, and the Young Socialist Alliance.

Since 1853, the French settlers have reduced the Kanak population of the island through brutal massacres from 200,000 to 61,000. "Now they call us a minority community. But we are not a 'community.' We

are the real people of this land," Ounei pointed out.

"We want all our land that has been stolen from us. There are only 374,000 acres left for 61,000 Kanaks, while 1,000 farmers have 432,000 acres. They take our copra and call it 'savon de Marseilles.' They take our coffee and call it French coffee, and they take our flowers and call it French perfume."

Ounei explained how the Kanaks have suffered from forced underdevelopment by French imperialism. The French government wants to maintain control of New Caledonia because of the rich mineral reserves and strategic military importance of the island.

In mid-1984 all of the pro-independence groups and other national liberation organizations joined forces to form the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS). The FLNKS has led protests and land occupations, and it established a provisional government in December 1984.

Ounei's tour aims to raise money to fund the establishment of a Kanak radio station and newspaper to combat the lies of the French-controlled media on the island.

Ounei also spoke at a meeting of the Moulders and Allied Workers Union. She was interviewed on WAGG, Birmingham's Black radio station.